

SHOPGIRL

by

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based on his novel

First Draft

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INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Beverly Hills. We're in the busy ground floor cosmetics department. Young salesgirls apply make-up to slightly older women, and to each other. Customers swarm. Gleaming rows of perfume bottles glisten in the Southern California light that pours through the glass doors of Neiman Marcus.

The camera dips in tight on pancake make-up being swabbed with a powder puff.

A woman evaluates her make-up in a counter-top mirror as the salesgirl looks on with deep concern.

One salesgirl stands out: 32 year old LISA CRAMER. Her body enhanced by every means. Her sweater strains at the urging of her artificial breasts. But she's got what it takes; she's a knockout - in this town.

Shopping bags, legs, sweaters, bracelets, credit cards all swirl in and out of frame. CAMERA moves higher, leaving the scene and its bustling noise.

UP, UP the CAMERA goes, transitioning to the quieter second floor.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Women's casual wear. Less customers than the first floor, but still it jumps. The sales girls are busy, retrieving dresses from the racks and taking them into the changing rooms. The customers are older here, more well-heeled, both in finance and in shoes. The CAMERA rises again, up to the third floor.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS THIRD FLOOR - DAY

Dresses, cocktail wear, older customers browse, professional shoppers and stylists present possibilities to their clients. It's quieter up here too. But the CAMERA doesn't stay here; it moves up again to the fourth floor: formal wear.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Gowns. An older woman slides out of a changing room, wearing an elegant evening dress. It's hushed up here, but there are a few women admiring the couture. The CAMERA GLIDES AROUND, and in the distance we see a solitary figure standing behind a counter. She stands at attention, her neck-length brown hair framing her porcelain face.

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She is pretty to us, but not up to Beverly Hills standards of hype and glory. She stands alone, ready for her first customer of the day.

She is MIRABELLE BUTTERSFIELD, on the shy side of 27. From BEHIND HER, her elbow in frame, we look over the counter that she commands, out into the vast expanse of Neimans, where a few customers pass, tiny in the distance.

The CAMERA MOVES DOWN HER LEGS. They are nice. We see what she sells in the glass counter: ladies dress gloves. We see her feet, stuck in her low heeled shoes. She takes her foot out, flexes out the stiffness, and slides it back in her shoe.

ON HER FACE: little make up. Pale skinned. Her clothes aren't expensive, but nicely coordinated. She adjusts a few gloves in the display.

DISSOLVE:

Later in the day. Her position has shifted.

DISSOLVE:

Later still. Momentarily she leans on the counter, warily. Her eyes shift and she quickly stands erect. WHAT SHE SAW: Her Japanese boss, Mr. Agasa, passing by in the distance.

DISSOLVE:

She checks her Timex. Two minutes to six. She closes the register.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle exits the elevator onto the first floor. It's still busy. She crosses the marble floors, walking stiffly like she's overly-balanced, her quiet demeanor in contrast to the dazzling cosmetics girls, and in particular, Lisa Cramer.

EXT. WILSHIRE BLVD. - DUSK

Mirabelle drives her 89 Toyota truck in a misting rain. She wears glasses when she drives, in full concentration. Garrison Keillor talks on the radio.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She hikes up the stairway to her apartment in Silverlake. The porch light comes on automatically as she approaches the door. Keys ready, she enters.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The bedroom. Poverty stricken-college girl decor. Mirabelle, in a shirt and panties, kneels on the floor, with her head poking under the bed. She holds a cat bowl filled with wet food.

MIRABELLE

Come on. Come on out. You wanna eat?
You want something? There's food in
here. You want it?

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Close shot of the cat dish being set down on the kitchen floor.

MIRABELLE V.O.

Here it is. It's in the kitchen.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

Mirabelle, her hair pinned, glasses on, wearing a sweatshirt, separates her laundry on a table top. She's the only one in the place, it seems, until we see there is one other. A twenty-six year old baseball-capped youth named JEREMY. He relaxes in a chair as his clothes swirl in the dryer behind him. He watches Mirabelle, but the last thing he is is frightening. Finally he speaks:

JEREMY

(as in hello)

Hey.

Mirabelle smiles a polite smile.

JEREMY (cont'd)

Need change?

MIRABELLE

No, I'm fine.

Jeremy, without looking, opens his dryer and feels his cloths. Still wet. He closes the dryer door.

JEREMY

Where do you work?

MIRABELLE

Neimans.

JEREMY

Oh yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
Where do you work?

JEREMY
I'm an artist.

MIRABELLE
(perking up)
Oh yeah? Me too.

JEREMY
What kind?

MIRABELLE
I draw. What do you do?

JEREMY
I stencil. You know Doggone amplifiers? I
stencil their logo on the amps. I'm an
okay guy by the way.

MIRABELLE
You didn't have to tell me that.

JEREMY
How come?

MIRABELLE
I could tell.

JEREMY
How could you tell?

MIRABELLE
Because I'm counter-intuitive.

JEREMY
Oh. Hey, what's your number? I could
call you.

On Mirabelle; no reaction.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle, in her underwear and getting ready for bed,
applies lotions to her body. She puts her foot up on the
toilet and glides the cream down her leg.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In bed, Mirabelle finishes a 19th century novel. She closes
the book, stares up at the ceiling. She takes a breath and
holds it. Lets it out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

5.

MIRABELLE
(to the cat)
Good night, Sylvia.

Silence. She reaches up and turns out the light.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle at the glove department. Standing. Arranging.
Dissolving through to various shots of her waiting.

INT. NEIMAN'S ACCOUNTING - DAY

Mirabelle picks up her check from the corporate accounting window.

CLERK
Have a good weekend.

MIRABELLE
You too.

EXT. ATM - NIGHT

Mirabelle deposits her check at an ATM, and retrieves what we clearly see is one twenty dollar bill.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT of Mirabelle writing a check to Master Card. We see the debt: \$7285. She writes a check to Master card for \$80.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle grooms. Half dressed, she blows out her hair with a dryer.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

She angles herself in front of a mirror, looking at the final outfit.

EXT. SILVERLAKE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Mirabelle, alone, enters the club. A sign reads, MUSIC TONIGHT, The Tawdry.

INT. SILVERLAKE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

She sits alone in the half empty club. Couples are around her. A band plays; Mirabelle, a beer in front of her, listens to the music.

DISSOLVE TO:

Mirabelle watches the band, still alone, nursing the same drink. Her eyes focus in on an amplifier: DOGGONE AMPLIFIERS, it says, and there's a logo of a running dog with speed lines behind it. Her face registers the connection.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle, wearing a robe, is setting up a cheap Polaroid camera. She's aiming it at her bed. The CAMERA angles toward a mirror, so we see Mirabelle, her body obscured by reflection. She sets the Polaroid to "timer" and presses the button we hear the countdown. IN THE MIRROR we see Mirabelle take off her robe, and lie down naked on the bed, as the camera snaps the photo.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mirabelle, in her robe, sits in the kitchen with the kitchen lamp pulled down low and she's intensely drawing the image of herself from the Polaroid.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Again in her bedroom, in bed.

MIRABELLE
(to the cat)
Good night, Sylvia.

Again, she sleeps.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mirabelle, in the kitchen. She takes a pill from a vial, and swallows it down, absentmindedly.

INT. GOVERNMENT WAITING ROOM - DAY

An office bearing the dingy color of bureaucratic green. Several people, Mirabelle's age, sit in a waiting room.

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE - DAY

Mirabelle sits before an official who could be nasty but isn't. The OFFICIAL, a woman, examines Mirabelle's folder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

7.

OFFICIAL

...so you have a student loan of 39,452 dollars, and you're currently paying it off at the rate of...45 dollars a month.

MIRABELLE

Yes.

OFFICIAL

Do you think you could increase that payment to...

(she does some finger punching on a calculator)

160 dollars per month?

Mirabelle laughs.

MIRABELLE

Oh my God. I would love to.

(still laughing)

But it's just not going to happen.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

It's morning on the first floor of Neimans. The cosmetics girls, without customers to animate them, are still as statues. However, LISA CRAMER is busy in the mirror, applying whatever to her face. Mirabelle walks to the elevator, her simplicity in subtle contrast to their fully puffed and pampered images.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Noon. A young couple pops out of the elevator. A celebrity couple. Shopper's heads turn. It's the TV star TREY BRYAN and his girlfriend. Customers stop and stare and so does Mirabelle. They pass by the glove counter and don't even look up at her. She watches them go off as they make fun of the dresses which no way would ever suit the TV star's girl.

TREY

The worst.

GIRLFRIEND

Second floor is great.

TREY

You want something? Seen anything you want?

GIRLFRIEND

That Chloe dress was good...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They never looked up at Mirabelle. They edge away. On Mirabelle, as she watches. There's a presence in front of her, a MAN.

MAN

Excuse me?

MIRABELLE

Oh yes. Sorry.

MAN

(off her look to Trey)
Is he famous?

MIRABELLE

He's on that show "Extra-Terrestrials."

MAN

Haven't seen it.

MIRABELLE

Either have I.

MAN

How'd you know who he is, then?

MIRABELLE

Osmosis.

The MAN is 50 years of age. He is well-dressed in a dark suit and tie. He looks at the gloves in the counter.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Would you like to see something?

MAN

These black ones...and these gray ones.
One size fits all?

MIRABELLE

They come in different sizes, but mostly they'll fit anybody. Unless. You know, she's big.

She takes them out of the case.

MAN

Which do you think is better?

MIRABELLE

Depends on the dress. What color is the dress?

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Hmm. Okay. I'll gamble on the black ones.

MIRABELLE

Safe.

MAN

Then I'll take the gray ones.

IN CLOSE on his credit card slip being signed. We see the signature: MR. RAY PORTER. He slides the slip back to her; she hands him the package.

RAY PORTER (MAN)

Thank you.

MIRABELLE

Thank you.

He turns and walks away. Mirabelle looks at him, and then AT HIS SHOES. Her face blankly registers approval.

SOUND EFFECT OVER: HORN HONK

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She exits, dressed for a night out. She runs down her steps, looking very cute. An iffy car waits on the street for her, and as she approaches, the door is pushed open by JEREMY, her laundromat flirt.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - NIGHT

Mirabelle slips into the car.

JEREMY

Hey.

MIRABELLE

Hi. You look nice.

JEREMY

Hey. Thanks.

EXT. UNIVERSAL CITY - NIGHT

They stroll. He sits on a bench in front of the EXTRAVAGANT NEON FACADE of a movie theatre.

JEREMY

Fantastic isn't it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Yeah.

Pause.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Are we going in?

JEREMY

Go in? I Thought we'd just look at it.

MIRABELLE

Oh.

JEREMY

Tickets are like, ten bucks.

Another pause.

MIRABELLE

We would just sit here then?

JEREMY

Or walk around.

MIRABELLE

We could split it.

JEREMY

Okay. Can you lend me two bucks?

They walk toward the ticket booth.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jeremy and Mirabelle pull up after their date. He walks her to her door.

JEREMY

Okay.

MIRABELLE

Well, thanks for driving me.

JEREMY

Could I see your place?

MIRABELLE

I think I should go to bed.

JEREMY

(that's the point)
Cool...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

11.

MIRABELLE
So, good night.

JEREMY
Oh. Okay. Hey, here's my phone number.
Gotta pen?

She looks in her purse. Produces one.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Any paper?

She produces paper. He writes it down, hands it to her. He turns to go.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Mirabelle?

MIRABELLE
Yes?

JEREMY
Can I kiss you?

MIRABELLE
The point being?
(on his blank look)
Okay.

He does. It's nice. He turns to leave.

JEREMY V.O.
Oh, hey. You know what?

MIRABELLE
What.

JEREMY
You look nice too.

MIRABELLE
Jeremy. Are you the kind of person it takes time to get to know, and then once you get to know them, they're fabulous?

JEREMY
Well, not yet.

She smiles. She enters. Jeremy's feet clap down the stairway.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Inside, Mirabelle takes off her sweater, drops her skirt to the floor. She notices the paper with the phone number in her hand. She hesitates, but throws it in the wastebasket.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY

Mirabelle enters a medical building in Beverly Hills.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mirabelle sits opposite Dr. Curtis, a woman in her fifties.

DOCTOR CURTIS

Your doctor was Dr. Campbell...in the valley?

MIRABELLE

Yes. He moved. Neimans gave me your name.

DOCTOR CURTIS

And you want to renew your prescription for Serzone. Okay...let's see.
(scanning her chart)
How's the depression?

MIRABELLE

Less.

DOCTOR CURTIS

Are you tired?

MIRABELLE

Not noticeably.

DOCTOR CURTIS

Headaches?

MIRABELLE

No.

DOCTOR CURTIS

Stomach upset?

MIRABELLE

No.

DOCTOR CURTIS

How's your sex drive?

(CONTINUED)

MIRABELLE
(after a pause)
I don't know.

DOCTOR CURTIS
Has it diminished?

MIRABELLE
That's a hard thing to judge. I'm not
really involved right now.

DOCTOR CURTIS
All right.
(checking the chart)
You've been on Serzone for...a year and a
half.

MIRABELLE
I think.

DOCTOR CURTIS
Here's a prescription for six more
months. Serzone. What were you on
before?

He searches her chart.

MIRABELLE
Prozac. It stopped working.

DOCTOR CURTIS
What were the symptoms?

MIRABELLE
It was very sudden. I was feeling good,
very good, and then, one afternoon I
crashed twice as deep as I'd ever been
before.

DOCTOR CURTIS
Sometimes these drugs can turn on you.
We just put you on something else, like
the Serzone. It takes a few weeks to
take effect. Any changes in the way you
feel, let me know. We can keep adjusting
the medication.

INT. TOYOTA TRUCK - NIGHT

Mirabelle drives home. The radio on, traffic slobby. She
listens to talk radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADIO SHRINK

...You see Susan, your husband doesn't understand that it's afterglow that's important to a woman, much more important than the sex act itself. A woman needs to be held. Even if it's by someone she doesn't care about. Protective hormones are released. And the amount of hormones released depend on the degree to which she is held. The first and best is the complete surround. He wraps you in both arms whispers how beautiful you are.

Mirabelle listens, rapt.

RADIO SHRINK (cont'd)

Second best is the arm around. He's next to you, but with one arm around you.

On Mirabelle's face, an ache.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She's looking in the wastebasket. Nothing. Finally, she turns it upside down.

RADIO SHRINK V.O.

Third is he's just next to you on his elbow, but he rests his hand on your stomach and looks at you. Fourth is you snuggling up to him, with your head on his chest, while he looks away into space. But when the first best happens, you feel, completely, wonderfully, like a woman. It's a chance a woman takes...

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She's in the garbage bin, rooting around.

ANGLE:

She comes up with the small scrap of paper bearing Jeremy's phone number.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mussed from her garbage can excursion, she presses the phone number out on an end table, and dials. A futon made into a sofa centers the living room.

INT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT SAME TIME

Jeremy, couch potatoed on his sofa, watches a sitcom.
Starring Trey Bryant?

The phone is in the foreground on a pillow. Jeremy gets up to go the kitchen. He accidentally KICKS the pillow. The phone JARS AND IS SLIGHTLY OFF THE HOOK.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT SAME TIME

Mirabelle having just dialed, hears the clatter of the phone.

MIRABELLE

Jeremy?

INT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT SAME TIME

TIGHT SHOT OF THE PHONE OFF THE HOOK. In the background, Jeremy enters with a coke, sits on the sofa and resumes watching the TV.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT SAME TIME

Mirabelle on the phone.

MIRABELLE

Jeremy?

She listens. She can hear the laugh track of the TV.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Jeremy!

INT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT SAME TIME

OVER THE PHONE IN THE FOREGROUND, we see Jeremy watching the sitcom.

MIRABELLE V.O.

(phone filter)

Jeremy? Jeremy! Jeremy!

DISSOLVE:

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT LATER

Mirabelle has placed the phone on SPEAKER and she stares at it. We can hear the TV playing through the phone.

MIRABELLE

(screaming)

JEREMY! JEREMY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON JEREMY.

Oblivious.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

JEREMY! JEREMY!

She screams again. She catches herself at what she's doing. She starts to smile, which turns into a laugh. She rocks back into her futon/sofa, and laughs harder. She falls over sideways, and her laughter continues, slowly turning into tears. A crying jag - and not controlled either.

ANGLE ON JEREMY

Oblivious.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

She sobs dry tears now. And emits a chuckle.

ANGLE ON JEREMY

He's thinking about something, starts to get up.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

She goes to the handset, dangles it.

ANGLE ON JEREMY

He's over at the phone. He picks up the receiver, unaware that it was off the hook. He opens his battered phone book and dials.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

She starts to hang up, but takes one last listen. She hears him dialing. She's curious. She speaks.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Hello?

ANGLE ON JEREMY

JEREMY

Hello?

MIRABELLE

Is this Jeremy?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

Yeah.

MIRABELLE

Do you know who this is?

JEREMY

Yeah. Mirabelle.

MIRABELLE

Did you just dial me?

JEREMY

Yeah.

MIRABELLE

Did you know that...

JEREMY

What?

MIRABELLE

That...never mind

JEREMY

So. I was wondering if you want me to come over.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The bathroom. Mirabelle showers.

QUICK CUTS:

In a robe, applying lotion.

Spraying herself with Evian.

In her bedroom: Slipping a sweater over her head, then changing her mind, and trying on another. The broken doorbell rings with a ding and a clank.

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She answers. It's Jeremy. Poorly dressed for the occasion. He holds a fast food sack.

JEREMY

Hey. I brought some fries.

MIRABELLE

I can tell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY
How did you know?

MIRABELLE
I can see through the bag.

CLOSE UP ON THE BAG: It is transparent from the grease.

CUT TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jeremy stands near her college girl shelf bearing cd's and a cheap music system; Mirabelle is on the sofa, doing her best to be seductive. She picks up a remote control, points it at the CD player and clicks. The volume comes on INTENSELY LOUD, spooking Jeremy.

MIRABELLE
(jumping up)
Sorry.

She turns down the volume. There's an awkward pause. They look at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT A FEW MINUTES LATER

The lights are low. Mirabelle sits on the edge of the bed. Both are dressed. Jeremy, standing, is leaning over and kissing her.

MIRABELLE
We'll need a condom.

JEREMY
Got it.

He reaches in his pocket and tears open a small packet.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Shit.

MIRABELLE
What?

JEREMY
It's a mint.

MIRABELLE
What?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

I picked up the wrong packet.

(then)

Do you have one?

MIRABELLE

No.

There's a pause while they figure this out.

JEREMY

I could pull out.

MIRABELLE

(as in "no way")

Right.

JEREMY

Okay so let's see.

(he pauses, thinking)

Do you have a baggie?

MIRABELLE

What?

JEREMY

Like a Jiffy bag? We could use that.

MIRABELLE

(depressed)

Oh God. You'll have to go get one.

JEREMY

Kinda breaks the romantic mood.

MIRABELLE

What romantic mood?

JEREMY

(hurt)

I kissed you.

MIRABELLE

I know; I'm sorry. Want to just hug?

JEREMY

Jeez. Why? I mean, I drove over...

MIRABELLE

Could you go get a condom?

JEREMY

I've got like two bucks on me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE
Hand me my purse.

He does, and she gives him a five dollar bill.

JEREMY
I'll pay for most of it. This is just in
case it's more.

He exits. Mirabelle sits on the edge of the bed.

CUT TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jeremy enters.

MIRABELLE
That was quick...

JEREMY
Yeah and here's your five bucks back.

MIRABELLE
Where'd you get it?

JEREMY
Your neighbor was coming out; I asked him
if he had one.

Mirabelle falls back on the bed.

MIRABELLE
Oh God.

JEREMY
It's okay. He was cool.

Pause.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Still want to do it?

She doesn't speak.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Want a massage?

She shakes her head no. She reaches out her hand to him and
pulls him toward her, onto the bed. She undoes his belt as
he kneels over her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY (cont'd)

Okay. Hang on...

He stands up and takes off his jeans. Still in his underwear though. In the candlelight, we see him walk toward the bed. BANG! He slams his shin into the bed.

JEREMY (cont'd)

Ow!

MIRABELLE

Oh sorry. I've done that. The bed frame sticks out. Are you okay?

JEREMY

Yeah, yeah.

He gets on the bed, kneeling over her, holding his shin. Mirabelle loosens her blouse. (NO NUDITY FROM MIRABELLE IN THIS SCENE) Jeremy slides off his underwear, which dangles off the bed from his foot.

ANGLE ON:

The bed frame. We see the kitten, SYLVIA, come out and bat a paw at the swinging underwear. She takes several GOOD SWIPES.

ANGLE ON:

Mirabelle and Jeremy. She is lying back, partially dressed, Jeremy, nude on knees and arms over her, kissing her.

ANGLE ON:

The kitten jumps on the sofa. We watch the kitten's eyes following something back and forth.

ANGLE ON:

Jeremy and Mirabelle. WAIST SHOT of him over her. Suddenly Jeremy YELPS.

JEREMY (cont'd)

Ow!

He leaps off her.

MIRABELLE

What?

JEREMY

Something just hit me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE
(seeing the cat scurrying)
Sylvia, bad girl! Are you okay?

JEREMY
Yeah, it was like somebody was throwing
marshmallows at my balls.

MIRABELLE
Are you okay to...

JEREMY
Do you want me to go?

MIRABELLE
No. No. Stay.

The atmosphere turns sexier. She pulls herself to him.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Jeremy and Mirabelle lie in bed. Post-coital. Apart. Far apart. Mirabelle, slight frown. Jeremy stares into space. Long, nervous silence.

MIRABELLE
All right?

JEREMY
That was nice. Thank you.

MIRABELLE
(repeating)
Thank you.

There's another pause. Mirabelle is losing the wager with herself, because there is at least an arm's length between them. The CAMERA MOVES UP AND ABOVE. We see the two of them lying apart. Then Jeremy is suddenly on his elbows, talking.

JEREMY
Amplifiers are so underappreciated.

MIRABELLE
Huh?

JEREMY
(firing up)
First they could be so cool looking.
Nobody thinks about design. Mac designs
a cool computer and everybody buys one.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY (cont'd)

A band lives or dies by their amplifiers,
but they're sold like they're
refrigerators. Amplifiers could have
mystique.

He's out of bed now, talking in his underwear. Mirabelle
stares agog. We see Jeremy anew - charged with energy.

JEREMY (cont'd)

They could be sold like cool things, like
cars. Not just like appliances. No
wonder my boss is going under. He views
them as merchandise. Not objects of
romance. See what I mean?

MIRABELLE

Uh...

JEREMY

Anyway...

He gets back in bed, again lying apart from Mirabelle.
There's a pause while he thinks, then HE PULLS HIS BODY OVER
TO HERS AND SNAKES HIS ARMS AND LEGS AROUND HER, HOLDING HER
CLOSE. Mirabelle's eyes shut with pleasure.

EXT. LA BREA OUTDOOR RESTAURANT - DAY

It's the next morning. Mirabelle sits with two friends of her
age, LOKI and DEL REY. She is giggling, almost crying.

LOKI

Oh my god.

DEL REY

Spooky.

LOKI

A baggie.

DEL REY

Good to know in case you ever want to
have sex in a supermarket.

LOKI

What do you do with the Zip-lock?

They laugh some more; then there is calm.

Mirabelle's mood changes.

MIRABELLE

Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOKI

What?

MIRABELLE

Should I have told you?

LOKI

Why not?

MIRABELLE

I don't like making fun of him. He was what he was, but he was decent.

DEL REY

Gossip is what we do.

MIRABELLE

I shouldn't have told.

LOKI

Why not? It's us. We tell you.

MIRABELLE

I just...

LOKI

What?

MIRABELLE

I don't think he would have.

A little silence. Loki and Del Ray don't share her sentimentality.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

What are you doing for Thanksgiving?

DEL REY

Jeez, it's a month away.

LOKI

You sorting out Christmas too?

MIRABELLE

Christmas I go see my parents in Vermont. Thanksgiving can be a problem for single people.

LOKI

We'll figure out what we're doing and call you.

(to Del Rey)

Probably Tony's barbecue, right?

(CONTINUED)

DEL REY

Him or the thing at the Art Alliance studio. We're going to the Art Walk on Monday right?

MIRABELLE

I definitely am.

LOKI

Good. You know that scene.

MIRABELLE

I'm a little art gal.

They laugh. Drink their iced tea.

INT. DOGGONE AMPLIFIER COMPANY - DAY

A small warehouse with a loading dock. It is stacked with amplifiers. Jeremy is on the loading dock, doing the all important finishing stenciling. His clothes are paint-splashed. In the background, Jeremy's boss CHET talks to a rock manager type whose Mercedes is nearby. Jeremy listens as they talk.

MANAGER

It would be great advertising.

CHET

Listen, they're a great band. I just can't give away fifteen thousand in amplifiers.

MANAGER

Think how many people would see them.

CHET

The band makes money. Why can't they buy them.

MANAGER

We've got big companies wanting to give us stuff.

CHET

I'm not a big company. But we make great amps.

ANGLE ON JEREMY

He listens.

ANGLE BACK TO SCENE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The manager gets in his limo and drives away while Chet watches.

ANGLE ON JEREMY

He thinks.

ANGLE ON CHET

Over Chet's back, Jeremy enters the frame.

JEREMY

You know what I was thinkin'.

CHET

(turning to him)

What?

JEREMY

Who hangs out with rock musicians on the road?

CHET

Who?

JEREMY

Other rock musicians.

CHET

And?

JEREMY

If you had someone on the road with one of the bands using our stuff, someone who looks sharp, like that guy does...

(he indicate the manager, whose car is quickly vanishing out the gate)

...someone the musicians could relate to, I bet you could sell a lot more amps.

CHET

Do you have someone in mind?

JEREMY

Me.

Chet is surprised.

CHET

And what do you want to be paid for this?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

A finders fee.

CHET

And what would you find?

JEREMY

Bands to use the amps. And if they use the amps and another band sees them and starts using them too, I'd like a finders fee for that too. Of five hundred dollars.

End on Chet's face, thinking.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle passes by the perfume counter on her way out. She passes by LISA CRAMER who is actively flirting with a well-off guy. She tests perfume for him:

LISA

(leaning in to him)

Here...smell.

She offers her neck.

INT. TOYOTA TRUCK - NIGHT

Mirabelle drives home. Glasses on. Sitting straight up, concentrating.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She parks her car in her space. She carries a box of groceries up the flight of stairs. The porch light comes on with her motion. She fumbles for her keys. No luck, she sets down the box. And notices: a postal wrapped package the size of a man's tie.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She puts down the groceries in the kitchen and curiously props the wrapped box on a mantel. Occasionally eyeing it, perhaps suspicious of it, or afraid of it, she puts away all the groceries.

LATER:

Mirabelle emerges from the bath, wearing her robe. She goes to the kitchen and sets the package on the table and sits down in front of it with a pair of scissors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes off the outer brown wrapping to reveal a more purposefully wrapped gift box underneath. She cuts through the fine paper with the scissors and opens the box. Inside: the pair of gray women's gloves she sold last week. A note falls out. It reads:

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH YOU, RAY PORTER.

CUT TO:

LATER

Mirabelle in bed. Low light. She looks over at the gloves on her dresser drawer, and the note lying beside them, amidst the mess of the package. She turns out the light.

INT. TIME CLOCK CAFE, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Mirabelle's regular lunch cafe. It's a diner type, one step above a yoghurt shop, with an outdoor patio on the street. She carefully counts out six dollars for her routine lunch.

EXT. TIME CLOCK CAFE, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

She wanders in the outdoor patio, which is right on the street. She passes by a man, Tom, who is her regular ogler at her traditional lunch spot. She carries a sandwich and a drink she just got from the counter, and sits herself on an outdoor wire table and chair. She unwraps her sandwich.

Mirabelle notices the woman sitting next to her: an overweight, brassy dyed blond woman in her fifties, seriously sucking on a cigarette and drinking a diet Coke. Smoke wafts over to Mirabelle, who tolerates it. The woman talks loudly on the cell phone. Even as Mirabelle orders, and the CAMERA IS ONLY ON HER, the woman's voice dominates the scene.

WOMAN

(talking on cell phone)

...Listen darling, there is no way you're not going to feel bad. It's a break up. Break ups feel bad. You just take some time, go sit down and just let it all the sadness come over you. Don't try to not think about it. Just let it come. And if you ever feel like calling him, you call me instead. Do you hear? You call me. What did I just say. Right. You call me. Okay sweetie...I know...just remember darling, it's pain that changes our lives.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She clicks off. The woman inhales deeply, and dangles the cigarette near Mirabelle, who stifles a small cough. Mirabelle's legs taunt the harmless Tom.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle waits with a finger on the register, eagerly waiting for the clock to strike six. When it does, she presses the button and closes the register.

EXT. WILSHIRE BLVD. - NIGHT

Mirabelle speeds down Wilshire. Smiling, rockin' to the radio.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

If front of the mirror, she assembles a snappy outfit.

QUICK CUT:

Mirabelle's hand slides a bowl of cat food onto the kitchen floor.

QUICK CUT:

Mirabelle on the floor talking to the unseen cat under the bed.

MIRABELLE

Food's on.

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY - NIGHT

A swinging art opening. Jammed. People with plastic cups filled with "wine." Mirabelle's face is in the crowd, one of the few not wearing black. She is surprisingly confident in this group. She looks around toward the door for Loki and Del Rey, who are nowhere in sight.

She angles over near a wall for escape from the crowd, and to look at the pictures. Her back is to a group of men, who are speaking. One is a handsome, genuine looking artist, the ARTIST/HERO.

FIRST MAN

(regarding the art on the walls)

This is dreck.

ARTIST/HERO

You just told her you loved it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FIRST MAN
You're surprised I lied?

ARTIST/HERO
I'm surprised you were kind.

FIRST MAN
I think it's derivative.

ARTIST/HERO
Of whom?

FIRST MAN
That guy, what's his name...that guy who
uses words in his paintings...

ARTIST/HERO
Lichtenstein?

FIRST MAN
No, no...

ARTIST/HERO
Basquiat?

FIRST MAN
No...not him. That guy....

Mirabelle pops in.

MIRABELLE
Ed Ruscha?

FIRST MAN
That's it.

MIRABELLE
This reminds you of Ed Ruscha? And, yes,
I was listening.

Artist/hero laughs.

ARTIST/HERO
Don't listen to *him*.

MIRABELLE
I'll remember that. You an artist?

ARTIST/HERO
Somewhat. I teach. You?

(CONTINUED)

MIRABELLE

Yes. Actually draw and sculpt. Where do you teach?

ARTIST/HERO

Cal-Arts.

MIRABELLE

I went to Cal-Arts. I thought of teaching too.

Mid conversation, Mirabelle notices, as her eyes scan the room for Loki and Del Rey, LISA CRAMER, the overly-done cosmetics girl, dressed to kill.

ARTIST/HERO

You got your M.A.

MIRABELLE

Yeah. It's bought but not paid for.

He laughs. He's interested. LISA CRAMER spots Mirabelle and walks over.

LISA

(to Mirabelle)

Hi!

Mirabelle is surprised at the warmth of the greeting, as she hardly knows her. But the greeting is not about Mirabelle, it's about HIM.

MIRABELLE

Hi.

LISA

Hi. We see each other but don't know each other. I'm Lisa.

MIRABELLE

I'm Mirabelle.

ARTIST/HERO

I'm Dick.

There's a pause. Mirabelle bursts into laughter, and so does Lisa, and finally so does Dick.

ARTIST/HERO (cont'd)

I get that reaction a lot. It must be in the way I say it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LISA
God you're funny.

ARTIST/HERO
That I don't get a lot.

LISA
(coming on to him)
It's because we're so transfixed, no one
can speak.

She tongues her drink, and flashes her eyes. Mirabelle
watches.

ARTIST/HERO
Your name is Lisa?

LISA
Cramer. Now it's your turn to laugh.

ARTIST/HERO
Why would I laugh?

LISA
To make us even.
(to Artist/Hero)
Can you get me a drink?

And Mirabelle is out of the running. She backs away, back to
the pictures.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - NEXT DAY

It's morning, but already Mirabelle is leaning over the
counter. She quickly rights herself as she hears the
elevator doors open.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY, BUT LATER

Mirabelle's face bewildered as OVER HER we hear A WOMAN
SPEAKING JAPANESE. WIDER, we see a wealthy Japanese woman
aided by someone who must be a houseboy. He carries a load
of shopping for her. The woman is buying gloves by the ton.
In CUTS, we see the credit card, the signing, the bagging of
the gloves. At last the deal is done and the woman and her
cohort back away.

JAPANESE WOMAN
Aragato.

MIRABELLE
Aragato.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The woman bows and backs away.

HOUSEBOY
Aragato.

MIRABELLE
Aragato.

JAPANESE WOMAN
Aragato.

MIRABELLE
Aragato.

And the woman is gone. But next to Mirabelle is a presence.
A man.

MAN'S VOICE
Did you get my package?

MIRABELLE
(startled)
Oh!

It's RAY PORTER. The man who sent her the gloves.

RAY PORTER
Sorry. I didn't mean to sneak up on you.

MIRABELLE
I was distracted by global commerce.

RAY PORTER
You got the package?

MIRABELLE
Yes. Thank you.

RAY PORTER
And?

MIRABELLE
Who are you?

RAY PORTER
Ray Porter. Look, I know you can't be
seen chatting up the customers. Why
don't you meet me Friday for dinner; you
don't even have to give me your phone
number, just show up.

ANGLE ON:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Big wide shot. They continue to speak, then Ray Porter backs away from Mirabelle with a smile, as Mirabelle stands in stillness.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SUCCESSION OF CUTS:

In the bathroom, Mirabelle creams her legs.

She blow dries her hair.

Now dressed to go out - her sense of style never letting her down - she looks in her wallet and sees five singles.

She prowls the kitchen and produces two more dollars and some change, which she puts in her purse.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS STREET - NIGHT

Mirabelle, holding a scrap of paper with an address, drives her truck down Wilshire, past the restaurant, La Ronde, which is just around the corner from (or if possible, right next door to) the Reynaldo Gallery. Valet parking only. Not a parking space in sight. The sign says "valet parking, 4 dollars."

EXT. ANOTHER BEVERLY HILLS STREET - NIGHT

She looks desperately for a parking space; there's not one. She checks her watch.

EXT. YET ANOTHER BEVERLY HILLS STREET - NIGHT

She finds a spot, far, far from the restaurant. She gets out, the wind is blowing strongly, and she quickly jumps back in the car, deciding that she doesn't want her hair wrecked by walking the several blocks to the restaurant.

EXT. LA RONDE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

She gives her car over to the valet.

She approaches the door to the restaurant. First she pushes on it. It won't open. Then she pulls on it but still it won't open. She tugs on it; no luck. A couple walks by her, pulls on THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR. It opens and they enter. Mirabelle had been pulling on the wrong side. She enters too.

INT. LA RONDE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It's a dark, but smart, Italian restaurant. The maitre 'd approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAITRE 'D
Buona sera. How may I help you?

MIRABELLE
Hi, I'm meeting Mr. Ray Porter.

MAITRE 'D
Oh yes, nice to see you again.

Mirabelle has no reaction, because she doesn't think that way.

MAITRE 'D (cont'd)
Right this way.

They pass several tables with older patrons. A few older men sit with younger women. He takes her around a corner to a leather-backed booth. Ray Porter sits, and looks up from a note pad which he promptly puts away.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

The orange lamp light makes her glow, and she looks beautiful.

RAY PORTER
You're on time.

MIRABELLE
Why not.

He sits her to his right.

RAY PORTER
Would you like a drink?

MIRABELLE
Red wine.

RAY PORTER
(playful)
What shade.

MIRABELLE
(equally playful)
Maroon.

He smiles.

CUT TO:

WINE BEING POURED.

RAY PORTER
Do you remember my name?

MIRABELLE
Your name and expiration date.

RAY PORTER
From the credit card. Sneaky.

MIRABELLE
Not as sneaky as you getting my address.

RAY PORTER
Oh that. Grim determination. Sorry.

MIRABELLE
So far so good.

RAY PORTER
Thanks.

MIRABELLE
So who are you?

RAY PORTER
I live in Seattle. I have a place here.
I come down here a lot. I'm divorced.

MIRABELLE
What do you do?

RAY PORTER
I'm a logician.

MIRABELLE
You're very well dressed for a logician.

RAY PORTER
A computer logician.

MIRABELLE
Oh.

RAY PORTER
Some other lifetime I wrote a code.

MIRABELLE
I understand. I have one other question.

The maitre 'd approaches with menus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Why me?

The maitre 'd looks at Ray Porter. Ray Porter looks at him. They both know they answer, but Ray is too much of a gentlemen to conspire with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER IN THE DINNER

Ray Porter looks at Mirabelle. Her white BLOUSE, in the two inch space between the buttons, bellows open and closed as she breathes.

MIRABELLE

So how did you get my address?

RAY PORTER

I lied to Neiman's, then made one call to information. Your name is unusual. Buttersfield.

(pronounces every syllable)
Mirabelle Buttersfield.

MIRABELLE

Have you done that before?

RAY PORTER

I think I've done everything before, but no, I don't think I've done that.

As they speak, the FILM TEXTURE CHANGES. Everything visual SLOWS DOWN, though without going into slow motion. We see Mirabelle's blouse, and the small opening between the buttons. The camera, from Ray Porter's POV, MOVES IN SLOWLY on this opening, which continues to move with her breath. We see, as we get closer, FLESH, the slope of Mirabelle's breast at the top of her WHITE BRA. The following dialogue occurs OVER THIS SHOT.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

What do you do?

MIRABELLE

What do you mean?

RAY PORTER

I mean, besides work at Neiman's?

MIRABELLE

I draw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER

What do you draw?

MIRABELLE

Usually dead things. I did a series of drawings of people caught in the lava of Pompeii.

RAY PORTER

So you're just a simple, ordinary girl.
What are you drawing now?

MIRABELLE

Myself.

The camera is in a tight shot of her pale skin against the white of her bra.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Will you give me your phone number?

MIRABELLE

Which you already have.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Your phone number is off-limits for sneaky obtaining.

MIRABELLE V.O.

All right.

EXT. LA RONDE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ray and Mirabelle stand at the curb. The valet brings her truck. Ray and Mirabelle say good night, and she walks around to her open door. Camouflaging her poverty, she starts to dig into her purse for what's left of her weekend money. But the valet speaks:

VALET

It's been taken care of.

She looks up at Ray. Behind her, his car, the most expensive Mercedes, has pulled up. As he gets in, he looks good to her, like an adult, in his dark blue suit and tie.

INT. TOYOTA TRUCK - NIGHT

She drives home, deep in thought.

INT. RAY PORTER'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

He drives, and in flashback, he relives the shot of Mirabelle's blouse breathing in and out.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle enters, and notices her message machine blinking. She puts down her purse and begins to refresh the cat's water bowl as she listens to the message.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Hi, it's Ray...I had a nice time with you....I have to go back to Seattle tomorrow, but I'll be back in a week...seeing if you want to go out Thursday. I'll call you in a couple of days or you've got my number.

The phone rings. On pause for a moment, she picks up the phone. It's Jeremy.

MIRABELLE

(anticipating Ray)

Hello?

JEREMY V.O.

Hey, what are you doing?

MIRABELLE

You mean now?

JEREMY V.O.

You wanna come over? Come on over.

MIRABELLE

It's too late.

JEREMY V.O.

It's not too late.

MIRABELLE

It is for me; I have to get up.

JEREMY V.O.

Come on. I'm leaving town for a couple of months.

MIRABELLE

I can't.

JEREMY V.O.

Come on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

No.

JEREMY V.O.

Want me to come over there?

MIRABELLE

No.

JEREMY V.O.

I can be over there in ten minutes.

MIRABELLE

I can't.

JEREMY V.O.

We could meet somewhere.

MIRABELLE

No.

JEREMY V.O.

Why not?

MIRABELLE

Because I'm seeing someone.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle strides past the cosmetics girls. Lisa Cramer notes her cheerful attitude.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle stands behind her counter, merrily arranging the gloves around the counter top, fashioning a tip-top display. Mr. AGASA passes by.

MIRABELLE

(suddenly feigning low-energy)

Oh, Mr. Agasa?

MR. AGASA

Yes?

MIRABELLE

I was wondering if I could get an extra hour for lunch? I'm need to go to the doctor...

He starts to complain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. AGASA
Well, can't you do it...

MIRABELLE
It's a female problem.

MR. AGASA
Oh.

MIRABELLE
I think I should be checked.

MR. AGASA
(a tad embarrassed)
Well, of course. Just...just. Whatever
you need.

Mr. Agasa exits. Mirabelle watches him go, and once he's out of sight, she throws her fist into the air.

MIRABELLE
(whispers)
Yes!

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS STREET - DAY

She struts down Rodeo Drive. She angles her face toward the sun. She is on a spree. Not a shopping spree, because she can't afford it. Just a spree resulting from being free of work.

QUICK CUTS:

She window shops at Armani and Prada, loving the clothes in the displays.

In Saks, looking at another lonely girl behind the glove counter.

EXT. TIME CLOCK CAFE, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Mirabelle's usual spot. She eats a sandwich and leans back, enjoying the sun. Her benign stalker, Tom, a man in his late thirties, eyeballs Mirabelle, because she, today, is joyously attractive.

She is jarred by a voice:

LISA
Hey.

It's Lisa Cramer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA (cont'd)
Mind if I join you?

CUT TO:

Lisa and Mirabelle sit at the table. They're now both eating.

MIRABELLE
You ever have men ask you out at the
store?

LISA
Daily.

MIRABELLE
Do you ever go out with them?

Lisa nods an "of course."

LISA
Somebody ask you out?

Mirabelle shrugs, not wanting to answer.

LISA (CONT'D)
You want some advice?

She doesn't pause for Mirabelle's answer.

LISA (cont'd)
You never call him. But if he calls you,
you talk to him, then act like you've got
another call. Keep him on hold for a
long time. Like longer than you think is
possible.

Mirabelle stares, not really knowing what she's talking
about.

LISA (cont'd)
...and break dates. Always break dates.
Right before holidays. And...
(she leans in)
Fellatio. The sooner the better. And a
lot. Then, after he's addicted, cut him
off. That's when you've got him.

MIRABELLE
I couldn't do all that.

LISA
How come?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE
I'm from Vermont.

On Lisa's bewildered face, we cut.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle, dressed for a date - this time in a short skirt - sits on her futon. In silence. She checks the time.

The phone rings. It's Ray Porter.

RAY PORTER V.O.
I'm lost.

MIRABELLE
Aren't we all?
(then)
Okay, where are you?

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT LATER

Mirabelle answers the door and lets Ray in.

MIRABELLE
Hi.

RAY PORTER
Hi. I think I can see your apartment from my house.

MIRABELLE
Really?

Ray glances around the apartment.

RAY PORTER
I live by the observatory, and I can see the observatory from your steps.

MIRABELLE
Well, should we go...or stay...Uh...want to sit down?

RAY PORTER
Sure.

She offers the overly-low futon. He bends himself in half to sit on it.

MIRABELLE
Want something to drink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER
What do you have?

MIRABELLE
Uh. Water, and cranberry juice.

RAY PORTER
I'll have a cranberry juice.

MIRABELLE
It's unsweetened.

RAY PORTER
You mean it's...

MIRABELLE
Straight from the cranberry.

RAY PORTER
I'll wait till the restaurant.

MIRABELLE
Should we go?

RAY PORTER
Okay.

He struggles to get up off the futon, with Mirabelle's help.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They walk stiffly to the car.

MIRABELLE
You'll like the Cha-Cha-Cha. It's fun.
Whoo-hoo.

INT. THE CHA CHA CHA - NIGHT

It's a swinging Caribbean restaurant. Cheap-o but fun. Ray Porter sits with Mirabelle.

RAY PORTER
Want wine?

MIRABELLE
No thanks. I don't think it's good with the medication.

RAY PORTER
The Serzone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Yeah.

RAY PORTER

By the way, you don't seem depressed.

MIRABELLE

I'm just taking it for a while.

RAY PORTER

Anyone else in the family get depressed?

MIRABELLE

My dad. But not always. After Vietnam.
He came home and didn't speak much.

RAY PORTER

Tough time.

MIRABELLE

He won't talk about it.

Ray Porter looks at her.

RAY PORTER

You look like an angel.

She does.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT STREET - NIGHT

He helps her out of the Mercedes. There's a glimpse of her legs as gets out of the car. They walk up to the apartment.

RAY PORTER

It's cold out.

MIRABELLE

Yeah, it is.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The doorstep. They are saying good night.

RAY PORTER

This was our awkward second date.

MIRABELLE

Was I boring?

RAY PORTER

No, not at all. We have to get the
second date out of the way, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He strokes her neck with the back of his hand. She sighs. He kisses her. Things get a little more serious. Unbuttoning one button, he puts his hand in her blouse. Her breathing increases. Then there's a pause.

Suddenly, the neighbor - the one Jeremy borrowed the condom from - comes out of the door across the hall. He notes Mirabelle with Ray, and give her a sly look. Mirabelle giggles.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

What?

MIRABELLE

Unexplainable.

RAY PORTER

Okay. So...

MIRABELLE

I don't think you should come in.

RAY PORTER

I'm not asking to.

MIRABELLE

Meaning?

RAY PORTER

Meaning, I want to see you again.

MIRABELLE

Okay.

She opens her door with the key.

RAY PORTER

Is it strange for you to kiss me?

MIRABELLE

Why would it be?

RAY PORTER

Because I'm older.

MIRABELLE

No.

RAY PORTER

I'll be gone a week. Do you want to have dinner next Friday?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE

Okay.

RAY PORTER

We could eat at my house.

MIRABELLE

(pausing, knowing what she's
committing to)

Okay.

Hold on her face.

EXT. RAY PORTER'S SEATTLE HOUSE - DAY

Ray and his carry-on bag arrive at his Seattle house via car service. It's a nice place - 2 million dollar range. He tips the driver and enters.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SEATTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Nice place. Ray is in the kitchen. The doorbell rings at the service entrance. It's food delivery.

DISSOLVE THROUGH:

To the white bag, resting on the kitchen table. WIDEN and we see Ray eating sushi out of the bag while he stands in the kitchen watching a football game on a small kitchen TV.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jeremy, MATCHING RAY PORTER'S POSITION AND POSTURE, stands in his kitchen, watching the same football game as he eats fast food out of a white sack.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle, luxuriously relaxing in her two-bit bathtub with the plastic shower curtain.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RAY PORTER'S SEATTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Ray, still rapt by the TV, finishes up the sushi, wads up the paper bag and tosses it in the trash.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jeremy wads up the white paper bag and tosses it in his overflowing trash.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle still in the bathtub, which is now lit by candlelight, anoints herself with a low budget bath oil.

THE SCENE FADES TO BLACK.

EXT. SKY - DAY

A private jet streaks through the sky. Ray Porter on his way back to L.A.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Mirabelle sits in a chair while Loki and Del Rey RIP linen from her legs. A home kit for leg waxing.

EXT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mirabelle arrives at Ray Porter's house in her Toyota Truck. A house in the hills, it overlooks the entire city. Ray stands on the street waiting for her, with the front door of the house open with light pouring out from the inside. As Mirabelle gets out of her car:

RAY PORTER

Hi.

MIRABELLE

Hi.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a bachelor pad without being too sickening. Decorator touched, and largely unused. A fire is in the fireplace, blazing away behind glass. Ray escorts Mirabelle in. He touches a switch; the lights change to dim. He takes her coat. It's a little bit like the spider and the fly, but without the menace.

RAY PORTER

Don't be frightened by the automatic lights. They were already in when I bought the place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
I'm not frightened.

RAY PORTER
Do you want some wine?

MIRABELLE
Maybe later.

RAY PORTER
Wanna give me your coat?

She takes off her coat; underneath, she looks sexy and stylish. He hangs up the coat in a closet. There's lots of awkwardness in the air. They stand apart.

MIRABELLE
You have a nice house.

RAY PORTER
Think it's too done?

MIRABELLE
No, it's nice.

Big pause.

RAY PORTER
Want to sit...?
(better idea)
No, want to go outside?

EXT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE BALCONY - NIGHT

They stand on the porch, looking through binoculars.

RAY PORTER
I can see the building but not your apartment.

QUICK CUT:

Mirabelle holds the binoculars. She's looking at the top of her building. Then she SWINGS THE BINOCULARS OVER, and we see what she sees: JEREMY in his window, on the sofa, watching TV, his hand absentmindedly down his pants, an open suitcase on the floor.

She's a bit startled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Oh!

CUT TO:

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

They sit in an candlelit alcove, having a dinner out of paper bags.

RAY PORTER

Have you ever sold anything?

MIRABELLE

There's a dealer on La Brea who takes my drawings. They sell one occasionally.

RAY PORTER

How often do you do a drawing?

MIRABELLE

About every six months.

RAY PORTER

Why so few?

MIRABELLE

I don't know. I'm slow I guess. I like to wait for the ideas to come.

RAY PORTER

You sure you don't want wine?

MIRABELLE

I'm sure. Thanks.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

RAY PORTER

Would you like to see the rest of the house?

MIRABELLE

Sure.

RAY PORTER

You sure you don't want some wine?

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They walk into the bedroom. Fire in the fireplace. Soft music; soft lights. Books stacked by the bedside, by the fireplace. Each with a bookmark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mirabelle looks beautiful in the warm glow. She looks at the wall. A nice painting. She stares; he comes up behind her and places his hands on her shoulders. She is slightly stiff. He turns her around. They caress; her arms droop by her side. He kisses her; she breathes deeply. He holds her away from him and slowly undoes one of her buttons.

The phone rings. Ray Porter is annoyed.

RAY PORTER

Let me go turn off the phones.

He slips away as she stand there. We hang for a second on Mirabelle's inscrutable face. Her blouse open, her hair mussed from his hand.

INT. RAY PORTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ray enters his office. The answering machine is recording a male voice "...we would like to conference on Tuesday" or some boring thing. Ray punches a few buttons on his phone, turning off the ringing.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

He walks down the hallway toward his bedroom.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He enters, looks. His face is calm.

WHAT HE SEES: -

Mirabelle, lying nude, face down on the bed, looking up at him. Her pale skin glowing in the firelight. She grins at him.

He walks to the bed and sits beside her. He slides his palm down her back, her hips, her legs, her feet.

FADE OUT.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Ray shuffles around the kitchen while Mirabelle sits like a child at the breakfast table. He serves her, getting the cereal, making the toast, getting the drinks. She does nothing and it annoys him.

RAY PORTER

You wanna get the coffee?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Once instructed, Mirabelle knows what to do. But Ray does most of the work, finally setting down the bachelor breakfast in front of her.

RAY PORTER (CONT'D)
That was nice last night.

She nods.

MIRABELLE
My doctor will be pleased.
(on his quizzical look)
My sex drive is alive and well. Do you have some jam?

RAY PORTER
Sure...

He gets up and gets her some jam.

RAY PORTER (CONT'D)
Is it okay if I make a speech?

MIRABELLE
Okay.

RAY PORTER
Look, I've been divorced four years, I'm not really looking for anything permanent right now.

MIRABELLE
I understand.

NOTE: THE SCENE CONTINUES, BUT CONTINUALLY JUMPS FORWARD AND BACK IN TIME BETWEEN THE KITCHEN, RAY'S SHRINK, AND MIRABELLE'S LUNCH WITH LOKI AND DEL REY.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SHRINK - DAY

Ray sits in an expensive shrink's office in Seattle.

RAY PORTER
I told her that there's no possibility that this could be a long term relationship. She's just too young for me.

SHRINK
But you want to sleep with her.

RAY PORTER
Well...yeah.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

Mirabelle sips drinks with Loki and Del Rey.

MIRABELLE

He said he was surprised that he was
interested in me.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Same scene: Ray dines with Mirabelle.

RAY PORTER

(to Mirabelle)

But I like seeing you.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

MIRABELLE

(to Loki and Del Rey)

He said that since he met me he is
looking for something long term.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SHRINK - DAY

RAY PORTER

But I told her that even though it's not
long term, I would still like to see her.

SHRINK

And she understood?

RAY PORTER

Oh yeah.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

RAY PORTER

(to Mirabelle)

I'm traveling too much right now.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

MIRABELLE

He said he wants to cut down on his
traveling.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SHRINK - DAY

RAY PORTER

Then I said, essentially, that I would
like to sleep with her when I'm in town.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

RAY PORTER
(to Mirabelle)
So what I'm saying is, we should keep our
options open.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

MIRABELLE
He said that he may stop traveling
completely, and we'd decide what to do at
that point.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SHRINK - DAY

RAY PORTER
I said that even though we might sleep
together, I still thought we should see
other people.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

RAY PORTER
(to Mirabelle)
Do you understand?

MIRABELLE
I do.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

LOKI
So he was really taken with you.

MIRABELLE
It seemed like it.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SHRINK - DAY

SHRINK
So you were really clear with her that
this relationship has no future?

RAY PORTER
Absolutely.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle strides across cosmetics, wearing the same dress
she wore last night, which means she is overdressed for work.
Her bed head hair is spiky. Lisa looks at her, analyzing the
situation.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle stands at her post, looking like a person who had too much wine last night, even though she didn't. She raises her finger, flagging Mr. Agasa who walks by in the distance.

CUT TO:

SAME TIME

Mr. Agasa is standing in front of her.

MIRABELLE

Mr. Agasa, I was wondering if I could talk to you about Christmas. If possible I'd like to get five days off rather than the three?

MR. AGASA

That's our busiest time Mirabelle...

MIRABELLE

I know, but it's so important for me to be home in Vermont, and three days just isn't enough.

MR. AGASA

Well, we'd all like to be home at Christmas...

-MIRABELLE

See my brother's psychiatrist is away at Christmas, and it takes the entire family being there to take care of him.

MR. AGASA

Oh. He's...

MIRABELLE

Suicidal. He's always been.

MR. AGASA

Oh, I'm sorry. How old is he?

MIRABELLE

He's 35.

MR. AGASA

What's his name?

MIRABELLE

Ken. Ken Buttersfield.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. AGASA

You know exercise is very good for depression.

MIRABELLE

Really?

MR. AGASA

There's a few web sites with all the information. Would you like to visit them?

MIRABELLE

Yes, thanks.

MR. AGASA

Let's see there is Health.com...mental health solutions.com...

Mirabelle scurries to find a pen and paper.

MIRABELLE

(now with pen in hand)

Let's see, health.com...

CUT TO:

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle on the phone.

MIRABELLE

(into phone)

Hi Mom. Guess what, I can come for Christmas! Whoo hoo! I just did it that's all. I'll make the reservations now for the cheapest flight. Will you tell Grandma I'm coming? She'll be so happy... Thanksgiving I'm taken care of. I'm going somewhere with Loki and Del Ray. The only thing, if anyone calls for Ken, would you tell them that he's too depressed to come to the phone?

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP: incense being lit.

There's a fire in the fireplace. Mirabelle is on the bed, dressed, but loosened. Ray sits on a chair opposite her. She looks lovely in the warm light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
Hi Mister.

He smiles.

MIRABELLE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

RAY PORTER
Looking.

Mirabelle likes this, and she calms and let's him look at her. Then she speaks.

MIRABELLE
Ask me any question.

RAY PORTER
Who invented the sewing machine?

MIRABELLE
Elias Howe.

RAY PORTER
Good.

MIRABELLE
Now I'll ask you any question.

RAY PORTER
Okay. -

MIRABELLE
Who's Jeff Koons?

RAY PORTER
I don't know.

MIRABELLE
He's an artist. The big puppy dog made
of grass?

Ray shakes his head, "I don't know."

RAY PORTER
Okay. Who's Rosemary Clooney?

MIRABELLE
That's easy. George Clooney's mother.

RAY PORTER
Yeah, but what does she do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE
A writer?

RAY PORTER
Sorry.

MIRABELLE
Okay, one more. How come you don't have
any children?

RAY PORTER
(after a pause)
I don't want them.

Finally he walks over to her and touches her face. She thinks
he's going to kiss her on the lips, but it's her neck he
ends up at.

EXT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mirabelle exits, with Ray in a robe. It's 7am. She's
dressed for the night.

MIRABELLE
Okay.

RAY PORTER
Okay. You going home before work?

MIRABELLE
It'd take an hour by the time I get to
work. You want to stay at my place
sometime?

Long pause.

RAY PORTER
Look, from here you're only ten minutes
from Neiman's. Why don't you bring some
clothes next time and you can leave for
work from here.

MIRABELLE
(she's pleased)
Okay.

RAY PORTER
So I'll see you after Thanksgiving?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
Don't stuff yourself with all that
turkey.
(then)
See ya, sleepyhead.

He smiles. She dons her glasses, puts her keys in the car - which turns over several times before it starts - and drives away.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Again, Mirabelle walks by Lisa Cramer, who reads her like a book: the glove girl has been out all night. Lisa eyes her jealously, curiously.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS EMPLOYEE PHONE - DAY

Mirabelle dials using a phone card.

INT. LOKI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tight shot on an answering machine. It answers.

LOKI'S ANSWERING MACHINE VOICE
(a short burst of music plays.
Then,)
Hi, it's Loki. You know what to do.

There's a beep.

MIRABELLE V.O.
Hi, it's Mirabelle. You're going to call
me for Thanksgiving right? It's
tomorrow...and I haven't heard from you.
Turkey day. Whoo hoo. Call me. I don't
have the address of the Art Alliance
studio and it's not listed.
(singing the next line)
I'm waiting!

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle enters after work, and walks over to her answering machine. The light is not blinking.

QUICK CUTS:

Cat food being put on the floor.

Cream being applied to her legs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sitting at the kitchen table, working on the drawing of herself.

She's in bed, looks at the drawing of her nude self. Then, lights out.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Tight shot on the cat bowl as sunlight rakes across it. It's empty.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Awake. She throws on a robe.

QUICK CUT:

She's brushing her teeth.

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

She stares at her answering machine. Then picks up the phone. She goes in the kitchen and looks at the clock. It's 8:30am. She goes back in the bedroom.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

She tries to sleep as she watches the clock. Finally, it's 10am.

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

She's on the phone.

MIRABELLE

Hey. It's me. I thought you might be up. Leave a message with the address where dinner is. Okay?

(starts to hang up, then)

It's Mirabelle.

She hangs up.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

She sits on the bed with her purse and counts her change. Four dollars-ish.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

She opens the refrigerator. There's a few bottles, but no food, except one half eaten sandwich. Mirabelle looks at it and realizes it might be her Thanksgiving dinner.

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

She stands in front of the phone and stares at it.

CLOSE UP: A clock. 2pm.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mirabelle sits on her futon. Waiting.

She gets up, puts on a hat and sweater, deciding to go for a walk.

EXT. SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

It's Thanksgiving day. And deadly quiet. She's on a walk. There's nobody in sight but her. There are SOUNDS though. A dog barking in the distance. A car door slamming.

EXT. ANOTHER SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

By a schoolyard. Empty of course. A tether ball chain clanks against its pole.

Across the street, in a backyard, there are sounds of a family barbecue. A child's ball is seen being tossed in the air from behind a fence.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

She opens the door and looks across the room toward the answering machine.

CLOSE UP OF MACHINE: no blink.

Mirabelle checks her watch. Turns around and goes on the hike AGAIN.

EXT. SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

Same walk. Nobody around.

EXT. DIFFERENT SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

Walking.

EXT. SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

She walks by a series of shops, all closed.

EXT. ANOTHER SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

The schoolyard. Still no one around. She checks her watch.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

She opens the door.

ANGLE ON THE CLOCK: 4:10pm.

She looks at the machine. The light is blinking. She pushes playback.

JEREMY V.O.

Hi, it's me Jeremy. I'm calling you from Athens Georgia. Happy Thanksgiving and all that. Guess what? I'm using Aja's roadie's cell phone. No charge. Cool huh? See you in six months...Bye.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE

She sits on the futon and stares.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

She opens the freezer and takes out a half-filled container of sorbet. She skims the freezer burn off the top of the sorbet and dumps it into the sink. She stands in the kitchen and nibbles on the rock-hard remainder.

THE CLOCK: 5:15

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM -DAY

She languishes on the futon. Mad. After a bit, the phone rings.

CLOSE UP ON THE MACHINE, RINGING

Mirabelle stares at the phone, angry. Finally the machine picks it up.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Hey. It's Ray. I'm here in Seattle, why don't you call me back...

She dives for the phone.

MIRABELLE

Hello?

RAY PORTER V.O.

You're there.

MIRABELLE

Just.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER V.O.

Do you have plans for tonight?

MIRABELLE

Somewhat.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Can you cancel them? I could be there in three hours.

MIRABELLE

I could cancel them.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Have you eaten?

MIRABELLE

No. I wanted to wait.

RAY PORTER V.O.

I'll bring food from the plane.

MIRABELLE

Plane food?

RAY PORTER V.O.

Private plane food.

EXT. SEATTLE PRIVATE AIRPORT - DUSK

A private jet lifts off the tarmac.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BATHROOM - DUSK

Like Susan Sarandon in Atlantic City, Mirabelle prepares herself. Ablutions. She puts talc on her naked body underneath her robe.

EXT. AIR LANE - NIGHT

From the cockpit, the jet lands in Burbank.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S STREET - NIGHT

A limo winds up a Silverlake street.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ray Porter, carrying see-through plastic food containers hikes the stairs to Mirabelle's. The porch light auto-on as he nears the door.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dimly-lit, Ray and Mirabelle sit in the center of the bed, with the plate food, napkins and utensils spread out on the bedspread.

RAY PORTER
(taking a last bite)
Finito.

He gathers up the debris and takes it into the kitchen. Mirabelle sits on the bed AND THE CAMERA STAYS WITH HER. We hear Ray dumping the trash, and we watch Mirabelle, who is about to be made love to and knows it, in repose, waiting for her lover to set the scene.

Ray re-enters the room.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)
Matches?

MIRABELLE
I'll get them...

RAY PORTER
(stops her)
I'll get them. You sit there.

MIRABELLE
Kitchen right hand drawer.

Ray disappears, then reappears with the matches. He lights a candle. He turns out the lamp.

RAY PORTER
Music?

MIRABELLE
Behind you.

Ray Porter turns on the college girl CD player. But the music's not right. He changes the CD to something romantic. He removes his shoes. He gets on the bed and sits across from her. He reaches over to her, and puts his hand, seductively, on her throat. She looks at him and trusts him. He slides his hand down her neck, to inside her blouse. They kiss.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM -MORNING

She sits in the bed, ravaged. The bed looks ravaged too. She hears the sound of the toilet flushing, then the shower running. The CAMERA STAYS ON HER FACE as she hears the sounds of a man in her apartment.

EXT. OUTDOOR LUNCH RESTAURANT ON LA BREA - DAY

Ray and Mirabelle eat breakfast on the street, under an umbrella.

RAY PORTER

(to waitress)

She wants a sesame bagel with cream cheese and I'll have the low-fat granola with skim milk.

MIRABELLE

Low-fat guy.

RAY PORTER

Gotta be. I want to live.

A pause.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

Are you okay with this?

MIRABELLE

This?

RAY PORTER

My seeing you?

MIRABELLE

Yes.

RAY PORTER

And you understand the situation?

MIRABELLE

What's the situation?

RAY PORTER

Well, we're dating. But not exclusively.

MIRABELLE

Uh huh.

RAY PORTER

I think we're not at the point where we should be exclusive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Well, I'm exclusive. I can't help it.

Blank look on Ray's face.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Okay, but...

RAY PORTER

What.

MIRABELLE

But if you sleep with someone, you should tell me.

Ray pauses.

RAY PORTER

You sure you want that?

MIRABELLE

It's my body and I have a right to know.

RAY PORTER

All right.

(then)

I'm not trying to sleep with someone it's just that...

MIRABELLE

I know. -

RAY PORTER

Hey. I have something for you.

He reaches in his coat pocket. Pulls out an envelope and hands it to her. Mirabelle opens it. She pulls out a red packet.

MIRABELLE

What's this?

RAY PORTER

It's an airline ticket to Vermont. For Christmas.

MIRABELLE

What do you mean?

RAY PORTER

It's a gift. You're going home for Christmas, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE
Yes. But why?

RAY PORTER
Because...because it's easy for me and
hard for you.
(then)
I know you don't earn much.

There's a pause while she debates with herself.

MIRABELLE
Thank you.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Christmas. The cosmetics department is decorated with
sparkles and glitter and wreathes. And the joint is jumping.
Shoppers galore, extra female salesgirls populate the
counters. Lisa Cramer is methodically selling a bundle of
goods to an older, brassy-haired woman.

LISA
...This is made with Salmon roe.

But out of the corner of her eye, Lisa sees something she
doesn't like.

WHAT SHE SEES:

Mirabelle crossing the cosmetics department floor, in a
beautiful, elegant dress.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Lisa on the phone.

LISA
...Karen, did you sell one of the
flowered print dresses in the last few
days? Size 2?

CUT TO:

EXT. PRADA, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

The exterior of Prada.

KAREN V.O.
...yeah. Some guy brought his girlfriend
in here.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Lisa.

LISA
What did she look like?

INT. PRADA, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Karen, a Prada salesgirl, is on the phone to Lisa.

KAREN
She was pale, dark hair, like twenty-five.

LISA V.O.
What was the name on the credit card?

KAREN
Jeez. Hang on.

Karen clunks down the phone. Goes to a drawer file and picks out a credit slip.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Ray Porter.

LISA V.O.
How much was it?

KAREN
Twelve hundred.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Lisa blanches.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On packed bags. CLOSE SHOT of Mirabelle sliding her ticket into a zippered slit.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She lugs her suitcases down the steps.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S STREET - NIGHT

She's sitting on her bags on the street, when a large limousine pulls up. The driver gets out.

DRIVER
Mirabelle Buttersworth?

INT. LAX FIRST CLASS LOUNGE - NIGHT

Mirabelle is ushered in to the first class lounge.

HOSTESS

Welcome to the first class lounge.

A porter takes her hand luggage.

INT. AIRPORT LUGGAGE AREA - MORNING

Now, quite un-fresh, with bleary eyes and her clothes askew, Mirabelle waits in another line for a commuter flight at a small airport.

INT. COMMUTER PLANE - DAY

She sits next to a brawny football player, whose fearful eyes betray extreme fear of flying. With each turbulent bump, he flinches. Mirabelle calmly reads.

INT. AIRPORT ARRIVAL AREA - DAY

It's a small, local airport. Mirabelle enters the lounge, and waiting for her are her parents, CATHERINE AND DAN.

DAN

Hi Kitten.

ANGLE ON MIRABELLE: Her hair in travel pigtails, she looks about eight years old.

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

They arrive from the airport and we see the exterior of the house. It's on the small side, with a plastic tarp over part of the roof as temporary fix for a leak.

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM - DUSK

TV on, the family sits in front of it, eating off trays. They watch and eat in silence. The doorbell rings, Catherine leaves the room and answers it.

DAN

You getting along okay out there?

MIRABELLE

Yeah. Neiman's is fine, and I sell a drawing sometimes.

DAN

How you doing for money?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Okay. I'm always rescued by a miracle.

DAN

What kind?

MIRABELLE

Grandma. Birthdays. Tax refund.

Catherine enters with a package.

CATHERINE

It's for you.

She hands it to Mirabelle. They watch in silence as Mirabelle opens it. She silently reads the card and smiles. Then removes the lid and holds up a stylish and brightly colored cashmere sweater.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

My.

She goes over to it.

CATHERINE (cont'd)

(reading the label)

Armani. Who's that from?

MIRABELLE

Oh. A man I'm dating.

CATHERINE

Oh. What does he do?

MIRABELLE

(lying)

He's an airline pilot.

CATHERINE

How old is he?

MIRABELLE

(lying again)

Thirty-five.

DAN

Should you be seeing someone that much older?

MIRABELLE

I dunno.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CATHERINE

Are you sleeping with him?

DAN

Catherine! Of course she's not.

Catherine turns to Mirabelle for an answer.

MIRABELLE

No mom, I'm not.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle cheerfully walks across the active first floor wearing her new Armani sweater. Lisa notices.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

A dinner party with Ray's friends. A woman in her fifties, draped in jewelry, is expounding. She's probably a European princess and she speaks IN FRENCH.

ELEGANT WOMAN

[LONG SPEECH IN FRENCH ABOUT FRENCH AND
EUROPEAN POLITICS]

The table laughs; Mirabelle sits quietly and listens.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Ray exits Mirabelle's apartment in the am, shielding his eyes from the sun, heading toward his car.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ray and Mirabelle sit on the bed, TV on, food on the bed side tables. There's a wrapped gift, maybe two, near Ray.

RAY PORTER

Okay. So. Happy Birthday.

MIRABELLE

Thank you, mister.

RAY PORTER

If you don't like them we can return them.

MIRABELLE

I never return anything you give me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER

But maybe you want to but were just waiting for me to say it was okay because you didn't want to offend me.

MIRABELLE

Silly. By the way, you know my birthday is tomorrow.

RAY PORTER

It is? Really? It's not today?

MIRABELLE

April 6th.

RAY PORTER

Hmm.

He grabs a palm pilot by the side of the bed. Taps it.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

Okay. Next year I'll get it right. You still want to open them now?

Mirabelle leans into his face and speaks in a light mood.

MIRABELLE

I love gifts.

He gives her the first package which she proceeds to open.

RAY PORTER

You may not like this...

Mirabelle takes out a pretty sun dress. It suits her perfectly.

MIRABELLE

Oh my God. It's beautiful. Thank you so much. Should I try it?

RAY PORTER

Oh yeah.

She disappears into the walk-in closet.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

(calling to her)

Hey, in six weeks I'm supposed to go to New York for a weekend thing. You want to go? Do you think you could get off?

(CONTINUED)

MIRABELLE V.O.

Oh my god oh yes!

RAY PORTER

You'll need a dress. It's a big rat fuck. We'll go shopping.

MIRABELLE V.O.

What's a rat fuck?

RAY PORTER

A big formal dinner you don't want to go to but have to.

MIRABELLE

(poking her head out)

What kind of dress?

RAY PORTER

It's a tuxedo thing. So whatever kind of dress that is. Let me take you to Armani next week.

MIRABELLE V.O.

I haven't been to New York since I was twelve. Six years ago.

He laughs.

MIRABELLE

Okay, ready?

RAY PORTER

Yeah.

She emerges in her sun dress. She looks pretty; Ray smiles. The room quiets. They look at each other. She walks over to him. He puts his hand on her leg and runs it up inside the dress.

The phone rings.

Ray ignores it.

We see the clock, it's ten PM.

His hand is up her new dress, touching her. She breathes. She stands there, not moving. The phone stops ringing.

FADE OUT

INT. ARMANI - DAY

It's the Armani in Beverly Hills. Ray sits in a chair, waiting. Momentarily, Mirabelle emerges in a beautiful gown. Ray nods his head approvingly.

LATER:

A seamstress is pinning the dress, tightening the back, etc. Mirabelle eyes herself in the mirror. Ray is near.

MIRABELLE
(to seamstress)
Could you excuse us for a minute?

SEAMSTRESS
Si.

She leaves. Mirabelle turns and looks at Ray.

RAY PORTER
What is it?

She walks over to him and takes his hand, looks him in the eyes.

MIRABELLE
(quiet, serious)
I've never had a dress fitted on me
before.
(then)
Thank you.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle stands at her counter. She is helping a customer, who is browsing.

MIRABELLE
Would you like to see them?

CUSTOMER
Yes, the ones second from the end on the
bottom.

Suddenly, Mirabelle's expression changes. She looks ill. Something has hit her. She opens out the lower drawer of the counter and sits on it, staring.

CUSTOMER (cont'd)
Are you all right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

I'm fine.

But we can tell she's not.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

She trudges up the steps of her apartment.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - DUSK

She opens her bottle of Serzone and takes ONE only.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She lies in bed, unable to move. The cat, which we see for the first time, watches her.

The phone rings but she doesn't answer. Ray Porter leaves a message.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Hi, it's me. Just seeing how you are.
I'm in town but busy. Call me.

Hang up. Mirabelle still stares into space.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

She wakes; looks miserable. She picks up the phone and dials.

MIRABELLE

Hi, can you give me personnel?...Hi Marge
It's Mirabelle Buttersfield. I'm sick
today.

She sounds sick too.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

She takes another Serzone.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

She lies in bed. Eyes open. The bedding is in disarray.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She's still in bed. Can't move.

INT. MIRABELLE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Still in her robe, she dials.

MIRABELLE

Hello, Doctor Curtis's office? This is
Mirabelle Buttersfield...

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Again, she's in bed. The phone rings. The message machine
picks up again.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Hi, it's Ray. Are you okay? You haven't
returned my calls...

Mirabelle picks up the phone.

MIRABELLE

Hello?...I've been sick...the doctor says
I'm depressed. He says the medication is
failing; it can happen with anti-
depressants. I'm supposed to go see
him...I will. Later. I just don't feel
like it now....

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ray pulls up in his Mercedes.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Ray takes Mirabelle down the flight of steps.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY

We're in front of Mirabelle's doctor's office. Ray is parked
in the red on the street, waiting for her. While he waits,
he looks around the streets of Beverly Hills.

WHAT HE SEES:

A Hispanic hot chick tightly packed into a pair of gold lame
pants.

A woman exiting the building with two new freshly enormous
lips.

A trio of women sporting very large fake breasts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A man Ray's age walks by with a twenty-four year old date. The man is overly-tanned and wearing an open shirt with neck-chains. He has bought her things. The whole effect is pretty silly. Ray observes the scene and worries if he and Mirabelle look as ridiculous. There is a tap on the window.

It's Mirabelle. Ray rolls down the window.

MIRABELLE

(blue)

I have to get some pills across the street.

RAY PORTER

Can you do it okay? I should stay with the car.

MIRABELLE

I'll be right back.

She jay-walks across the street. She stops; comes back.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

(at the car window)

I don't have any money.

Ray smiles, gets out of the car, and walks with her across the street. He looks back; he's getting a ticket. Mirabelle expresses concern, but Ray waves it off.

INT. RAY PORTER'S MERCEDES - DAY

They drive. Mirabelle slumps.

RAY PORTER

Do you feel any better?

MIRABELLE

(the answer is no)

Thanks for taking care of me.

RAY PORTER

What'd the doctor say?

MIRABELLE

He gave me the new pills, but he said they could take weeks to kick in.

RAY PORTER

Why don't you stay at my place tonight.

She turns to him and nods, yes. She shifts her legs. Her skirt wedges up. Ray notices.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle is on the bed. In shortie pajamas. Ray sits next to her, his hand on her back.

RAY PORTER
What's it like?

MIRABELLE
I tell them at work I have a bad flu
because that's the closest thing to it.

Ray looks at her legs. He puts his hand on her thigh. He's debating.

RAY PORTER
What do you think causes it?

Mirabelle's eyes drift. They well up. No answer. She just stares at him.

MIRABELLE
I wish it weren't happening. I wish it
weren't happening.

Ray becomes aware of the depth of her pain. He takes his hand off her leg.

RAY PORTER
I have something for you.

He goes to a dresser drawer, retrieves an envelope and hands it to her.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)
I know it's a month away, but here's your
airline ticket to New York.

She looks up at him through her immobility.

MIRABELLE
(small)
Thank you.

INT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Mirabelle, in a robe, mussed, sick looking. Ray gives her a pill from her new prescription punch package and a glass of water. We see it's the first pill of thirty to a packet.

RAY PORTER
I'm sorry. I have to be in New York.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
I'll be all right.

RAY PORTER
What are you going to do today?

MIRABELLE
I'll go work at Habitat, that charity?
The exercise will be good for me. Can you
drop me off? I can get a ride back.

EXT. HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORK SITE - MORNING

Ray and Mirabelle pull up in front of a home construction site in a poor part of town. A crew of young people hoist drywall and two by fours. A couple of guys watch as Mirabelle gets out of the Mercedes in her construction clothes.

YOUNG MAN
Hey, Mirabelle's dad is dropping her off.

They watch as Ray gives Mirabelle a very un-fatherly kiss and a squeeze of her ass.

The guys look at each other, perplexed.

YOUNG MAN (cont'd)
Close relationship.

EXT. HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WORK SITE - LATER

Mirabelle is painting a newly constructed wall in the housing project. The physicality of the act keeps her mind focused.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Mirabelle, exhausted, enters her apartment. She sits on the futon and folds her head down, unable to move. At least for a moment. Then she remembers something. She goes to her purse and retrieves the airline ticket to New York. She leans it against a pile of books, in a place of honor, and it seems to bring her some ease.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE UP: a tight shot of a month's supply of Serzone punched out of the aluminum packaging.

MIRABELLE V.O.
(cheerful)
Sylvia! Here girl. Here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSERT: Mirabelle lays down a kitty bowl that says "Good Dog" on it.

WIDER: Mirabelle laughs as Sylvia eats from the bowl.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mirabelle sits across from Dr. Curtis.

MIRABELLE

...I just don't think I need the pills.
I'm feeling fine.

DR. CURTIS

Yes, that's a very typical reaction. I do believe, Mirabelle, that you need to stay on the pills, at least another six months. Then we'll reevaluate.

MIRABELLE

Oh, by the way, my sex drive is in place.

She laughs uproariously. The doctor can't help but smile.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle strides in gayly.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle is at the counter, and Mr. Agasa is talking with her.

MR. AGASA

Mirabelle, can you work this Saturday?
We've got a bit of a prob...

MIRABELLE

(cutting him off)
Oh sure. I'll be happy to.

Mr. Agasa's surprised at her spirited "yes."

INT. SEATTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Ray Porter stands in the kitchen of his expensive Seattle house. He works at the kitchen table, starting to eat oat cakes. The phone rings. Ray looks at the phone.

INT. SEATTLE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

CLOSE UP: a spoon going in a bowl of caviar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ray sits in a restaurant with CHRISTIE RICHARDS, a woman in her late thirties. She's sexy, with a tight body that she's not hiding.

RAY PORTER

I'm glad you called. You saved me from a dinner of oat cakes.

CHRISTIE

You always treated me to nice restaurants, why not treat yourself?

RAY PORTER

Didn't feel like going out.

CHRISTIE

I would have brought food.

RAY PORTER

A little tricky.

She dips a potato into some caviar.

CHRISTIE

Eat some.

RAY PORTER

Cholesterol.

CHRISTIE

You are fucking old.

RAY PORTER

Maybe. But I took care of you pretty good.

CHRISTIE

You seeing somebody?

RAY PORTER

Hard to answer.

CHRISTIE

Is it serious?

RAY PORTER

No. No. I've been really clear with her.

CHRISTIE

Then it's okay if you fuck me.

RAY PORTER

Theoretically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTIE

A theoretical fuck. I'd like that.

RAY PORTER

Is that why you called?

CHRISTIE

(ironic)

No, I want to get involved with you again
and get slaughtered.

RAY PORTER

Are you mad?

CHRISTIE

Oh please. What for.

(she's tipsy; she mutters)

Ray Porter. Ray Porter. Rape Order.

(then)

Are you in love with her?

RAY PORTER

Funny. In a way. It's not love
like...love. But it's a kind of love and
I can't quite define it.

She looks up at him, puts her hand on his neck. Kisses him.
She pulls away.

CHRISTIE

(new subject)

Question of the night.

RAY PORTER

What is that?

CHRISTIE

How would you...like to just lie there?

RAY PORTER

What do you mean?

CHRISTIE

Tonight, how would you, Ray Porter, like
to just lie there? We could put on that
fucking music of yours and we could light
that fucking incense and we could put the
lights to dim, and you could pretend
you're in Thailand. And when it's all
over, I'll disappear into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

It's bright dawn. Ray is dressed and checking his watch. He looks annoyed at what he sees, which is Christie Richards splayed out in his bed, conked out and hung over.

INT. RAY PORTER'S OFFICE - MORNING

As he puts on his tie, he plays back his messages.

MIRABELLE V.O.

...Hi, Whatcha doin' mister? Just calling to say hello. I'm really doing well. I feel so good I feel like I could stop the pills, but I know that the pills make me feel so good I feel like I could stop them. Okay, so have a good night...bye.

There's a look of guilt on Ray's face.

INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY

Ray in a private jet, sitting, contemplating. What he's contemplating is whether to tell Mirabelle about his mistake.

He takes out his briefcase, extracts some stationary, and begins to write. "Dear Mirabelle," it begins.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on the letter. It rests on the bed. SOUND Of Mirabelle crying, wailing, moaning.

RAY PORTER V.O.

"Dear Mirabelle, I suppose the only way to say this is to say it. I slept with someone. It was not romantic or intimate, and if I had it to do over again I wouldn't..."

We see Mirabelle on the bed, sobbing big tears and we see Ray - shocked at her over wrought reaction - sitting on a nearby chair. He walks over to her to comfort her. She lets him, but she responds to him as though he weren't her lover, but her friend in a time of need.

RAY PORTER V.O. (cont'd)

"I am not telling you this to hurt you, and I am not telling you this because I want out relationship to change..."

Ray quietly picks up the letter off the bed and puts it in a drawer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER V.O. (cont'd)
"I am telling you this only because you
asked me to. I am sorry, Ray."

Mirabelle shrugs him off. She stands and puts on her high heels that she had removed and put beside. She grabs her sweater off the back of a chair. She is still distraught. She walks down the hall of the bedroom, stumbling in her grief.

As she walks, Ray speaks.

RAY PORTER
I put it in a letter because I was afraid
I would change my mind in the middle of
telling you...and you deserve to know...

MIRABELLE
(under her breath)
Why did you tell me.

Ray does not hear this. She sits on a hallway bench. Ray follows her and sits next to her. He puts his arms around her and she falls into his shoulder.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)
I can't go to New York with you.

RAY PORTER
Oh sweetie...

MIRABELLE
I can't go. How could I go?

EXT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mirabelle exits with her overnight bag, Ray following. She goes to her car and gets in. Ray goes to the window.

RAY PORTER
I'll tell you how stupid I am. I somehow
thought it would be all right.

Mirabelle snuffles in her car, then rolls up the window and drives off.

INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY

Ray in the plane, returning to Seattle. Contemplating what he has done.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SEATTLE HOUSE - DAY

Ray, setting his bags down, checks his machine. He fast forwards through eight messages, checking the beginning of each of them, none of them from Mirabelle.

INT. RAY PORTER'S SEATTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

He eats home delivered sushi. The phone rings. He lets the machine answer it.

MIRABELLE V.O.

Hi, it's me...Mirabelle. I was wondering...

He grabs the phone.

RAY PORTER

(into phone)

Hi...How are you?

Intercut?

MIRABELLE

Okay.

RAY PORTER

Hang up and I'll call you back. So you don't have to pay for the call.

They both hang up, he calls her back in a split second.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

Hi.

MIRABELLE

(still vulnerable)

Hi. I wanted to know if it would be okay if I used the New York ticket to go home to see my parents.

RAY PORTER

Of course it is. Are you sure that's what you want to do?

MIRABELLE

Yeah.

RAY PORTER

You don't want to come to New York?

MIRABELLE

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER
What have you been doing?

MIRABELLE
I had lunch with Loki and Del Ray.

RAY PORTER
Did you tell them anything?

MIRABELLE
No. They knew I was sad though. I told
them my mom's dog died.

RAY PORTER
Do you want to talk now?

MIRABELLE
Not now.

RAY PORTER
Okay.

MIRABELLE
Sometime.

RAY PORTER
Okay.

MIRABELLE
Okay. Bye.

She hangs up.

INT. COMMUTER PLANE - DAY

Mirabelle is on the small commuter prop plane to Vermont. As usual, it shakes and rolls, but she shows no fear. She's inside her head, filled with sorrow.

INT. MIRABELLE'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - DAY

She opens the door, bearing her luggage which she drops on the floor with a thunk.

CATHERINE V.O.
Dinner's on!

MIRABELLE
(calling)
I'll be there in a second!

INT. MIRABELLE'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

She's putting away her clothes in her childhood bedroom, which hasn't changed since age eight. There's a cardboard chest of drawers in the closet and she's down to the final drawer lowest to the ground. She opens it up, starts to put clothes in, but it's full of papers. She takes them out, and underneath it all is an array of photos spilling out of an album. She picks them up, and in the low lamp light, peruses them. CAMERA MOVES IN on the photos. They are childhood pictures from a happier time. Mirabelle on the shoulders of her father, good times. Then a few pictures of him in Vietnam war gear. Then a family shot of him home from the war, changed, stilled, quiet, unsmiling. The family, trying to look happy, but not quite succeeding.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL RESTAURANT - MORNING

Ray Porter in a breakfast meeting with several businessmen. The businessmen are presenting a deal.

BUSINESSMAN

...we have model based on the TTI formula, but modified where necessary and expanded where necessary. The new formula is much denser, much quicker to respond, takes in way more information than the original formula, and is still contained enough that five men and five computers can run the whole operation...

RAY PORTER

Can you excuse me a minute?

Ray gets up, goes to a lobby pay phone and dials.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Mirabelle has breakfast with her family. She looks like she's been crying all night. Breakfast is a solemn affair. Dan leaves the room to get the paper. The phone rings. Catherine answers.

CATHERINE

(to Mirabelle)

It's for you.

Mirabelle goes to the kitchen phone.

INT. NEW YORK RESTAURANT - MORNING

Ray speaks into the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER
Why don't you come to New York.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

On Mirabelle. She looks around at the kitchen and house.

MIRABELLE
Okay.

RAY PORTER
You have your dress?

MIRABELLE
No.

RAY PORTER
We'll go shopping. Can you get yourself here?

MIRABELLE
I'll find out and call you back.

RAY PORTER V.O.
Use my cell.

Mirabelle hangs up.

CATHERINE
What is it?

MIRABELLE
I'm going to New York.

CATHERINE
What on earth for?

MIRABELLE
I'm meeting Ray.

CATHERINE
Oh. That'll be a nice trip for you.

Mirabelle starts to leave the room, then turns.

MIRABELLE
I'll be staying with him.

CATHERINE
In a hotel?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Yes. But don't worry. I'm on the pill.

CATHERINE

Oh.

(then again)

Oh.

Dan walks into the room with the morning paper. Mirabelle is on her way out again, but then, instead, turns again.

MIRABELLE

Dad, I'm going to New York to stay in a hotel room with a man, but don't worry I'm on the pill.

She starts to go. Then turns...

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Oh, and by the way, he's fifty-three.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL BALL ROOM ENTRY - NIGHT

We see the arrivals of hundreds of formally dressed couples for a New York fund raiser. Almost everyone's older, and when Ray turns the corner with the delicately dressed Mirabelle, who looks like a nineteen-year old going to prom, more than a few lifted faces turn. Mirabelle looks virginal.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL BALL ROOM - NIGHT

They enter the ballroom. Mirabelle has never seen anything like it in her life. An exquisitely decorated stage towers over the giant centerpieces on each table. Mirabelle reaches in her clutch bag and quickly puts on and off her glasses for a fast, clear view of it.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ray and Mirabelle are in the interior of a wood paneled library of a fifth avenue apartment. A Picasso looks quizzically down on them. It's a post-event cocktail party. Every one in tuxes and gowns, and mostly, everyone's over forty. There's TOM, ELI AND MANDY, CHARLEY AND SHEILA, among others. There are also a few women in their thirties, but they are power women, New York women in sharp contrast to Mirabelle, and she sits among them like a flower. Conversation in the room is active and disjointed.

TOM

(getting drinks; to Mirabelle)
Would you like something Miranda?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE
Water please.

RAY PORTER
(just joining, missing the
Miranda comment)
Whatdya got in the wine department?

TOM
Some nice Bordeaux.

RAY PORTER
I'll take it.

ELI
(overlapping conversation)
...That was a beautiful Nauman that came
up. It was early; every museum wanted
it...

MIRABELLE
Nauman is a beautiful artist.

ELI
You own anything by him?

MIRABELLE
No...

ELI
What did you think of that last auction
price?

MIRABELLE
I...

CHARLIE
(Chiming in)
Nine million for a Nauman. Staggering.

ELI
How about the Koons? He's a slouch at
five point five?

And the conversation about art has shifted to money, leaving
Mirabelle out.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Mirabelle sits politely listening. Ray is close by, but
Mirabelle is practically invisible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANDY

...and so when we get the contract, nothing is reflected from the conversation. It's exactly the same with minor changes. This was the fifth back and forth and I'm thinking that either the man is a pathological liar, or he's not talking to his lawyers.

TOM

Barlow IS a liar. It's the conditions of doing business with him.

ELI

True. You listen, then read the contract the next day to figure out what he really meant.

TOM

Well, lying is a fundamental part of all out businesses, and ethics is in how the lying manifests itself.

MANDY

But when you lie, it shouldn't be that you will necessarily get caught the next day.

ELI

So we're talking about which lies are imprudent and which lies are practical.

MANDY

God forbid we should talk about which lies are immoral.

There's laughter in the room. Then quiet. Then something happens: Mirabelle speaks.

MIRABELLE

I think for a lie to be effective, it must have three essential qualities.

There's a hush in the room. All eyes turn to Mirabelle who sits on the leather sofa holding her Perrier.

MANDY

And what are those?

Ray Porter looks nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIRABELLE

First, it must be partially true to be believable. Second, it must make the listener feel sorry for you, and third, it must be embarrassing to tell.

There's an interested silence.

ELI

Explain.

MIRABELLE

It must be partially true to be believable. If you arouse sympathy you're much more likely to get what you want, and if it's embarrassing to tell, you're less likely to be questioned. I remember once I lied to my boss to get off work for lunch. I told him I had a female problem and had to go to a doctor. It was partially true because I do sometimes need to go to the doctor at lunch time, I aroused his sympathy because he thought I was sick, and because I said it was a female problem he was embarrassed to ask me about it.

There's an impressed silence in the room. Eli looks over at Ray Porter. Ray is dumbfounded.

RAY PORTER

(to Mirabelle, awestruck)

Can I get you something?

She smiles.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle stands in the doorway, exhausted. Ray approaches her, tries to kiss her. She pulls away.

MIRABELLE

I'm not ready to make love.

RAY PORTER

That's the right thing.

He backs away.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle asleep, curled up in fetal position, almost sucking her thumb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ray comes in the bedroom and is stopped by her childlike appearance. He looks at her, thinks. Worried, doesn't smile.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mr. Agasa walks purposely across the Neiman's expanse, when he is flagged down by Mirabelle.

MIRABELLE

Mr. Agasa!

MR. AGASA

Yes?

MIRABELLE

Could I grab an extra twenty minutes for lunch? I have to drive to Westwood. The student loan people called and asked me to come in.

MR. AGASA

Mirabelle, it seems like you always need an extra fifteen minutes, an extra twenty...

MIRABELLE

I owe the government nearly forty thousand dollars and I earn six an hour.

MR. AGASA

Oh. Well. All right.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Mirabelle drives and parks in a drab gray building in Westwood.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

She nervously trudges down an equally drab hallway. The enters a door that says "Department of Student Loans." She wasn't lying.

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE - DAY

Mirabelle sits in front of the female OFFICIAL, who shuffles papers in a file in front of her.

OFFICIAL

So. Thank you for coming in. We do need you to sign a few things.

MIRABELLE

Okay. What are they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICIAL

Just some papers finishing off the loan.

MIRABELLE

Oh. Okay. What do you mean finishing off the loan?

OFFICIAL

What do YOU mean? Your loan is paid off.

MIRABELLE

My loan is paid off? When?

OFFICIAL

(looks)

...last week. Just sign here, and here, and congratulations. It must be a relief.

On Mirabelle's face, we cut.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirabelle, in p.j's, jumps around the room. Ray watches her.

MIRABELLE

Oh thank you thank you. I mean it you didn't have to do it, you didn't.

Ray smiles; he is happy he helped.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

Oh my God. Whoo hoo!

She jumps him on the bed and looks into his face.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

You are the sweetest man.

RAY PORTER

It's something I can do for you.

MIRABELLE

Wanna back rub?

RAY PORTER

Later.

MIRABELLE

You do a lot for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER

I don't feel I give you very much.
Financial things, yes, but that's easy
for me.

MIRABELLE

I know it's hard for you to be close.

RAY PORTER

Sorry.

She sits on him. She looks at him and kisses him on the
lips. He doesn't respond much. She eyes him, looks into his
face, and saddens.

She gets off the bed. She's not angry or upset, just
reflective.

RAY PORTER (CONT'D)

What is it?

MIRABELLE

Are you just biding your time with me?

There is no answer from Ray. He gets off the bed and goes to
her, puts his arms around her.

MIRABELLE (CONT'D)

How much longer do we have?

RAY PORTER

Hey.

MIRABELLE

I'm sorry there's not much I can give
you.

RAY PORTER

You give me a lot.

MIRABELLE

Like what?

RAY PORTER

(after a moment)
Acceptance.

He pulls her to him.

MIRABELLE

I still don't think I'm ready to make
love. Is that all right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAY PORTER
I know. That's all right.

She goes over to the bed, Ray following. She lies down. He sits on the edge of the bed and they look at each other. Forced smile from Mirabelle.

MIRABELLE
Should I be seeing other people?

RAY PORTER
Don't...don't make me answer that.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

Lisa Cramer applies lipstick into a round counter-top mirror on a busy Wednesday. In the reflection she spots Mirabelle walking back from lunch toting a nice Prada purse. She peels away from the mirror and sidewinds up to Mirabelle.

LISA
(re the purse)
Nice.

MIRABELLE
Thanks.

LISA
New?

MIRABELLE
Yeah.

Lisa knows that it was bought for her.

LISA
I love Prada.
(Mirabelle doesn't say anything)
Are you going to the art walk again this year?

MIRABELLE
Yes. Are you?

LISA
Yeah, you going alone? We could...

MIRABELLE
Thanks but Ray and I are going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA
Oh. Well, I'll see you there.

MIRABELLE
Okay.

LISA
Okay.

Mirabelle exits. We stay on Lisa's conniving face.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Mirabelle is getting ready to go to the Art Walk. She steps out of the shower, wrapping her body in towel.

INTERCUT:

Lisa in her bathroom, stepping out of the shower into a towel.

INTERCUT:

Mirabelle getting shaving equipment out of the medicine cabinet.

INTERCUT:

Lisa getting shaving equipment out of a drawer.

INTERCUT:

Mirabelle, with one leg up on a cabinet, shaving her legs.

INTERCUT:

Lisa, her back to camera, shaving her vagina. Which is the difference between her and Mirabelle.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The phone rings. Mirabelle answers. It's Ray.

RAY PORTER V.O.
Hi, the plane's a few minutes late. Can I meet at the gallery?

MIRABELLE
Okay.

RAY PORTER V.O.
I'll be about a half hour late. You going to go early?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Oh yeah. I'll know plenty of people there.

RAY PORTER V.O.

See you there.

INT./EXT PARKING STRUCTURE, BEVERLY HILLS - DUSK

Mirabelle pulls into the covered, but open parking air structure (the lots between Santa Monica Blvd and Little Santa Monica Blvd). At the same time, another car pulls in - a nice car - but the sun is low in the sky and blinds Mirabelle's view. Mirabelle herself, facing into the dusky light, looks like a vision.

A man gets out of the car, and remains in silhouette, backlit by the sun, as he files a bill in his wallet. Mirabelle turns to leave the lot, but the man speaks.

MAN

Mirabelle?

Mirabelle turns. She still can't make out who it is. He approaches. He cuts a fine figure.

MAN (CONT'D)

Mirabelle?

MIRABELLE

Yes?

MAN

It's me, Jeremy.

Jeremy walks into the light. It's been eight or nine months since she saw him last. He's groomed. He's wearing a nice suit, and even nicer shoes.

JEREMY

It's nice to see you again.

MIRABELLE

Hi...Uh hi. You look so different.

JEREMY

I know. Changes. Remember the amplifiers? I'm a partner. What ever that means.

MIRABELLE

Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

Are you going to the Reynaldo gallery?

MIRABELLE

Yes. Are you?

JEREMY

Yeah. I'm leaving town tomorrow and didn't know if I'd make it back before the show closes. Mind if I walk with you?

MIRABELLE

Sure.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS STREET - DUSK

Mirabelle and Jeremy walk across Santa Monica Blvd. In the distance, we see a crowd around the gallery, and in that crowd, is LISA, ready for battle.

ANGLE ON LISA

She spots Mirabelle and Jeremy crossing the street. Jeremy takes her hand.

LISA

(to her girlfriend)

He's younger than I thought.

BACK TO JEREMY AND MIRABELLE

MIRABELLE

What...what...

JEREMY

Happened?

MIRABELLE

I suppose that's what I was going to say.

JEREMY

I evolved from ape to man.

She laughs.

JEREMY (cont'd)

I worked on myself.

MIRABELLE

That's what I need.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY
You here alone?

MIRABELLE
I'm meeting a friend.

JEREMY
Travel has left me friendless in L.A. I
have lots of friends all over the country
that I don't really know.

They have achieved the entrance to the gallery. They merge
into the crowd and noise.

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY - EVENING

Jeremy and Mirabelle enter the crush of the gallery. They
speak at full volume.

JEREMY
You want something from the bar?

MIRABELLE
No thanks.

JEREMY
I'm going to get something. It was great
to see you. I'll find you later.

MIRABELLE
Okay.

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY BAR - EVENING

Jeremy at the crowded bar. He catches the bartender's eye.

JEREMY
I'll have a Cosmopolitan.

He waits. Lisa, observing him, orders the same.

LISA
(to different bartender)
Cosmopolitan...

Jeremy gets his cranberry red drink and so does Lisa. Lisa
angles toward, feigning surprise.

LISA (cont'd)
(to Jeremy)
Oh my God, I've never seen anybody else
order one of these.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

I really just like the color.

LISA

Oh my god you're funny.

(then)

You have to drink the first sip with your eyes closed. Like this.

She does.

LISA (cont'd)

Go ahead.

He does.

LISA (cont'd)

See? Nothing to distract you from the first taste. How was it?

JEREMY

Noisy.

Lisa laughs uproariously.

LISA

I have a secret.

JEREMY

What's that?

LISA

I know who you are.

JEREMY

How?

LISA

You hear about people who are worth hearing about. I'm Lisa, Ray.

JEREMY

Hi, Lisa Ray.

She laughs again.

LISA

Sense of humor. That's good.
You...you...

JEREMY

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LISA
You...I can't. I'm shy.

JEREMY
What is it?

LISA
You want to have a drink later?

Jeremy looks over at Mirabelle, who's talking to the ARTIST/HERO, among others. He looks back at Lisa, whose breasts are overflowing her dress.

JEREMY
Yes.

LISA
When do you want to leave?

She searches his eyes.

LISA (cont'd)
Now?

JEREMY
Why not?

LISA
Do you need to tell Mirabelle?

JEREMY
I do what I want.

She likes this comment.

LISA
Well I take what I want.

JEREMY
And what do you want?

She smiles.

JEREMY (cont'd)
Let me say goodbye to her.

LISA
Okay, but I'll wait outside.

Jeremy leaves. Lisa walks toward the exit and passes RAY PORTER as he enters the gallery.

EXT. REYNALDO GALLERY - NIGHT

Mirabelle and Ray exit the gallery.

RAY PORTER
I was dropped off. You've got the car.

MIRABELLE
It's in the lot.

RAY PORTER
Wanna go to the Ivy? It's still early. We could get in.

INT. TOYOTA TRUCK - NIGHT

Mirabelle drives. She sits erect, and wears her driving glasses. Ray eyes her. He reaches over and puts his hand on her breasts. This is okay with her.

RAY PORTER
Why don't we just go home.

She looks at him, and makes a u-turn.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

On the bedside table, some food, some wine for Ray, and the bed's in disarray. *Après sex.* Ray and Mirabelle lie in the center of it all. TV on. Ray half watches. Mirabelle eats a cheese sandwich.

RAY PORTER
We missed the Lakers.

MIRABELLE
Do you care?

RAY PORTER
I wish I did. I'd be such a guy.
(pause)
Would you like a sports nut guy?

MIRABELLE
How?

RAY PORTER
As a boy friend.

MIRABELLE
(re: an interest in sports)
Better without.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER
What else?

MIRABELLE
What else what?

RAY PORTER
What else would you like in a boyfriend.

She's slightly irked. She speaks with an edge, imperceptible to the thoughtless Ray.

MIRABELLE
Sensitivity.

RAY PORTER
You mean like the feminine side.

MIRABELLE
Whatever.

RAY PORTER
What else?

MIRABELLE
Humor.

RAY PORTER
They all say that. I'm not sure they mean it.

MIRABELLE
Who says it?

RAY PORTER
Other women. Other women I've asked about this.

MIRABELLE
And what about you? What would you like in a wife?

RAY PORTER
Wife or girlfriend?

MIRABELLE
Try girlfriend.

RAY PORTER
Well, let's see.

The CAMERA STAYS ON MIRABELLE'S FACE AS RAY RECITES HIS LITANY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAY PORTER V.O.
Looks aren't that important to me.

Mirabelle, hurt, and stays hurt.

RAY PORTER V.O. (cont'd)
Outgoing, because men need that. The
women are buffers sometimes socially. A
peer. I want, when I see her at the end
of the day, to wonder what she's going to
say.

CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN ON MIRABELLE'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

RAY PORTER V.O. (cont'd)
And above all, I want to trust her.
(turning to Mirabelle)
You give me that...I trust you.

Half smile from Mirabelle.

INT. LISA BEDROOM - NIGHT

The camera pans across the bookshelf of a half-lit room. IN the BACKGROUND we hear sounds of love. Actually, not sounds of love, but sound of sexual activity. The book titles we see are: Dynamic Sex. Sex for Single Women. Boner! The Art of Genital Massage. How to Make a Man Come Back for More. Etc. On the chest of drawers we see various exotic items: a weird dildo, a French tickler, and more. The CAMERA PANS across to a full length mirror in which we see, dimly, two people moving around in wildly odd sexual positions. It's Jeremy and Lisa.

LISA V.O.
Oh big daddy! God you're a man! Ride
it!

ON LISA'S FACE:

LISA
Oh Ray. Oh Ray.

ON JEREMY, WHO IS SLIGHTLY BEWILDERED:

JEREMY
(thinking it's a chant)
Oh ray. Oh ray.

LISA
Let me get on the floor on my head.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Morning. Mirabelle is showering while Ray brushes his teeth. He pokes his head into the shower.

RAY PORTER

Do you want an omelet or toaster waffles?

MIRABELLE

Toaster waffles.

INT. RAY PORTER'S CLOSET - MORNING

Mirabelle in the closet. She does have a tiny four inches of space of her own. She picks out an outfit. Her mood is blue, introspective.

RAY PORTER V.O.

You okay in there?

MIRABELLE

Yeah.

RAY PORTER V.O.

Are you upset?

MIRABELLE

(lying)

No.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Mirabelle is dressed. Cute. She has her overnight bag in her hand. Ray enters.

RAY PORTER

By the way, I have to go to New York tomorrow. I've decided to look for an apartment there.

MIRABELLE

To move there?

RAY PORTER

No, just a place to stay when I'm there. Waffles are almost ready.

She gets up. They advance down the hallway, Ray in the lead.

MIRABELLE

Like a crash pad. Lucky Mister.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAY PORTER

Actually, I'm going to get a three
bedroom in case I meet someone.

Ray disappears around the corner. OVER HER BACK we see
Mirabelle stop in her tracks. Overcome with the insult. She
SITS on a hallway bench. Her arms sag. The bag slips out of
her hand.

There is a delay. Finally Ray appears from around the
corner.

RAY PORTER (cont'd)

I'm sorry.

He goes to her.

MIRABELLE

(soft)

Why do you have to keep reminding me?
You don't have to keep saying it.

RAY PORTER

I'm sorry. I didn't mean...

MIRABELLE

I know you've told me. I heard it. You
want a peer. You want an equal. I'm not
interesting. The only thing you like
about me is that I'm not pretty.

RAY PORTER

(trying to comfort)

What are you talking about?

MIRABELLE

Ray?

RAY PORTER

Yes?

MIRABELLE

Why don't you love me?

RAY PORTER

You know I do, sweetie. I just haven't
been able to cross over...to cross over
to where I should be to give you what you
deserve. I can't explain it...

MIRABELLE

So we're breaking up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAY PORTER
We don't have to.

MIRABELLE
Yes we do.

EXT. RAY PORTER'S HOUSE STREET - MORNING

Mirabelle, sporting sunglasses to hide her tears, with Ray toting her overnight bag, gets in her car. She puts on her driving glasses, sits erect in the auto, and as she drives away, Ray wonders if it's the last time he will ever see her.

INT. RAY PORTER'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ray, sad, passes through his bedroom walk-in closet. Something stops him. WHAT HE SEES: Mirabelle's missing clothes and the four inches of empty space.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

It's eleven a.m. and Lisa's still asleep. The bedroom is torn apart from the night of sex. Jeremy is gone. The PHONE rings.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JEREMY AND LISA:

JEREMY
Hey did I wake you?

LISA
Hmmm.

JEREMY
It's me, Jeremy.

LISA
Who?

JEREMY
Jeremy.

LISA
And who is Jeremy.

JEREMY
What do you mean, who is Jeremy.

LISA
Have we met?

JEREMY
It's me Jeremy, from last night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA
You mean we met at the gallery?

JEREMY
Jeez. It's me, from last night! We did all those Oriental things. Just calling to say whatever.

Dawn breaks on Lisa's face.

LISA
Oh, Ray.

JEREMY
Oh ray.

LISA
What?

JEREMY
Do you know who I am?

LISA
Sure, you're Ray Porter, from last night.

JEREMY
Who's Ray Porter?

LISA
Well, you are. Aren't you?

Worried look on Lisa's face.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - MORNING

Mirabelle walks her memorized walk across the first floor, past the disgraced Lisa.

THE NEXT SERIES OF CUTS IS A MONTAGE.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle, in WIDE SHOT, waits on a customer by rote.

SERIES OF CUTS:

Mirabelle at the glove department, different outfit, different day.

Later in the day, different outfit.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Mirabelle in bed, thinking, crying, thinking again. She gets up, goes to her closet and takes down a cardboard box. From it, she retrieves Ray's original note, inviting her to dinner.

INT. MIRABELLE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOSE UP: An ashtray, in it, the note is being burned.

EXT. TIME CLOCK CAFE, BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Mirabelle dines alone. Tom the Mirabelle watcher, approaches her and asks her out. She says no.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mirabelle furiously draws.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

Mirabelle shakes hands with Mr. Agasa. He hugs her goodbye.

INT. NEIMAN'S ACCOUNTING - DAY

Mirabelle picks up her final check; she hugs the accounting girl goodbye.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS FIRST FLOOR - DAY

She strides past the working girls, her head high. She smiles a goodbye at Lisa Cramer, who pauses and watches her leave.

EXT. NEIMAN MARCUS' DRIVE WAY - DAY

Mirabelle in her car, stops, takes one last back at Neimans.

EXT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DAY

The Reynaldo Gallery. The camera pushes in, up the curb, through the door. It turns a corner, and there sits at the reception desk, a smiling and optimistic Mirabelle, lonely at the counter.

MONTAGE ENDS.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Mirabelle walks up her steps. She sees a long box lying against the doorway, with an overly large Hallmark card attached to it.

INT. MIRABELLE'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - DUSK

She unwraps the package. It's a single rose. She reads the card, and we read it along with her. It reads:

I would like to have dinner with you.

And it's signed, Jeremy. At the bottom of the note there's an added postscript which reads, "My treat."

INT. MIRABELLE'S BATHROOM - DAY

Mirabelle blow dries her hair.

INT. MIRABELLE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dressed for an evening out, Mirabelle admires herself in the mirror. The doorbell clanks.

EXT. MIRABELLE'S STREET - DAY

A nicely dressed Jeremy escorts her to his new Honda.

JEREMY

Do you have any money?

(on her look)

I'm kidding.

EXT. UNIVERSAL CITY - NIGHT

Jeremy and Mirabelle stroll.

JEREMY

You want to go inside?

MIRABELLE

I'm happy walking.

JEREMY

Good, so am I.

MIRABELLE

Can I ask you a question?

He nods his yes.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)

What happened?

JEREMY

You can tell a difference?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIRABELLE

Oh yeah.

JEREMY

Good. Well, you know I went on the road.

MIRABELLE

With the amp company.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARENA - NIGHT JEREMY'S FLASHBACK

A rock band plays on stage. The lead guitarist strums, but with an anguished look on his face. He looks offstage. He signals "no sound." Suddenly from the wings, Jeremy runs on stage and takes an amp off the stage. He runs back on with a Doggone amp, and plugs it in. The concert continues.

EXT. BAND BUS - NIGHT

A rock band boards their bus which is parked inside the guts of an arena. Along with them is JEREMY. He is being hugged by a member of the band, LUTHER, as they walk. The band is jubilant.

LUTHER

Hey man, you saved our ass tonight.

JEREMY

No sweat..

LUTHER

What was that amp?

JEREMY

Doggone. The ones I've been telling you about for three weeks.

LUTHER

You been ridin' on the crew bus?

JEREMY

Yeah. Helping.

LUTHER

You want some dope?

JEREMY

No thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUTHER

Best answer. Ride with us. We've got an extra bunk.

INT. TOUR BUS - NIGHT

Luther shows Jeremy his bunk.

LUTHER

Here's where you sleep.

He pulls back the sleeper car curtains. He produces a pair of headphones.

LUTHER (cont'd)

Here's your headphones. They plug into this...and you go to sleep with music from the system.

INT. JEREMY'S BUNK - NIGHT

He lies in the bunk, the headphones on his head. We hear the tinny music filtering through. He's happy.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Some where up in the front of the bus, the sound system glows blue and red. LUTHER walks up to the system and opens the CD tray. He removes the CD.

INT. JEREMY'S BUNK - NIGHT

Jeremy responds sourly to the music being cut off.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Luther takes out another CD and puts it in the tray. We see its title on the case: YOGA MEDITATIONS

INT. JEREMY'S BUNK - NIGHT

On his face, CAMERA MOVING IN as he listens.

YOGA TAPE

...Relax. Relax your toes. And breathe.
Relax your ankles, and breathe...

Jeremy listens. Hates it.

YOGA TAPE (cont'd)

Feel you hands. Flex them.
(his hands involuntarily flex)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOGA TAPE (cont'd)

Fix yours eyes on an object in front of you.

He does.

YOGA TAPE (cont'd)

Feel your body, quiet your mind. Feel the sensation of being alive. Feel what it means to be alive. Only from this place of pure existence, can you begin to change, to change yourself, for a better and richer life...to turn yourself into a being capable of loving another person....

THE CAMERA moves around Jeremy's face. He is mysteriously, surprisingly, into it.

INT. BOOK STORE - DAY

A huge Barnes and Noble. Jeremy and Luther browse the audio book section.

JEREMY

(looking at titles)

Hey Luther. We've been listening to the same tapes for weeks. What say we get something new.

LUTHER

What do they got?

Jeremy takes down some titles. Next to the Meditation section, there's self-help.

JEREMY

More Yoga stuff. Hey look at these.

(reading)

"How to Love a Woman." Cool. "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus." "The Road Not Taken." "Soul Mates."

LUTHER

Get 'em all. We're on the road til February.

Jeremy throws them in Luther's hand basket.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNIVERSAL CITY - NIGHT

Jeremy finishes his story.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

So somewhere while I was being driven across Kansas, I had my consciousness raised, by accident. I'm just getting started, but I am trying to fix myself.

MIRABELLE

I'm trying to fix myself too.

JEREMY

Well, we'll always have something to talk about.

MIRABELLE

Ourselves.

JEREMY

Interesting topics. So you'll see me?

MIRABELLE

Jeremy. I'm just getting out of something. I need time.

JEREMY

I have time.

They stare at each other. He takes her hand and walks her toward the neon facade of the movie theatre, which, as the CAMERA PULLS BACK, dwarfs them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DAY

People mill around the front of the gallery. The CAMERA PAN across the facade: GROUP SHOW: NATHAN HORAN - DAVID WILD - SUSAN CRESOLE - MIRABELLE BUTTERSWORTH

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DAY

CLOSE SHOT: we see Mirabelle's nude drawing of herself, framed, and hanging on the wall. We see Mirabelle, more mature - not in age but in style - and next to her is Jeremy, who holds her hand and chats with the gallery owner. Incidentally, the ARTIST/HERO is there with his pregnant wife.

EXT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DAY

A black Lexus with two people in it cruises by the gallery. It stops. It's Ray Porter. Next to him is an attractive woman, 48. His eye is caught by something. We see what he sees: Mirabelle's name on the gallery window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANOTHER ANGLE

Ray and the attractive woman walk up to the gallery.

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DAY

Ray is inside. Across a crowded room, he catches Mirabelle's eye. She is happy to see him. She whispers something to Jeremy. Ray's date, wife, girlfriend, whatever, slides away from him.

EXT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DUSK

Ray and Mirabelle walk down a Beverly Hills street.

RAY PORTER
Congratulations.

MIRABELLE
It's nice.

RAY PORTER
Did you get your birthday present?

MIRABELLE
I did. Did you get my thank you note?

RAY PORTER
(thinks)
Oh. Right. I did. Sorry.

MIRABELLE
That's okay.

RAY PORTER
Are you happy?

MIRABELLE
I am. The lower intensity is nice. Who's your girlfriend?

RAY PORTER
She's a doctor.

MIRABELLE
Hypochondriacal no more. She can check you out.

RAY PORTER
She's a gynecologist.

MIRABELLE
Well, you'll have a lot to discuss.

(CONTINUED)

They laugh.

MIRABELLE (cont'd)
Are you happy?

RAY PORTER
I'm always a little edgy.

MIRABELLE
Restless.

RAY PORTER
That's a good word.

MIRABELLE
I'd like you to have the drawing of me
sleeping. It's in the gallery.

RAY PORTER
You don't have...

MIRABELLE
I want you to have it. I did it while we
were seeing each other.

A pause.

RAY PORTER
You know, I did love you.

MIRABELLE
I know.

RAY PORTER
And months after we broke up, I would
think of you and wonder how you were
doing, and I would worry for you and hope
that you were all right.

That's why we didn't last.

RAY PORTER
What do you mean?

MIRABELLE
You didn't love me as a man loves a
woman. You had become my parent. And I
allowed it. And we used each other to
move forward.

He looks at her, amazed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAY PORTER

And I want to tell how sorry I am that I
treated you...

She stops him.

MIRABELLE

No, no. It's pain that changes our
lives.

She hugs him. They turn and they walk back to the gallery

INT. REYNALDO GALLERY - DUSK

Ray and his date/girlfriend walk around the gallery.
Mirabelle chats with Jeremy and others. The camera picks them
out, intercuts between them. The CAMERA focuses on the small
drawing, hanging on the wall, that Mirabelle just gave Ray.
The camera moves in slowly on it as we FADE.

THE END